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ABSTRACT

The status of the Italian language in Australia, particularly in the educational system at all levels, in Australian society in general, and in trade, technology, and tourism is discussed in this report. It begins with a description of the teaching of Italian in elementary, secondary, higher, adult/continuing, and teacher education. Trends are traced from the 1950s through the 1980s, looking at political and religious factors in its evolution, formation of national policy, curriculum and assessment approaches, professional issues in teacher education, and research on learning motivations and attitudes toward Italian. Development of public policies and initiatives is chronicled from the 1970s, with specific reports, events, and programs highlighted. Teaching of Italian in various areas of Australia is also surveyed. A discussion of the role of Italian in Australian society looks at the impact of migration, language shift and maintenance, demographics of the Italian-speaking community, and cultural and language resources within that community. A final chapter gives an overview of Italian in the world context and discusses its importance to Australian trade and tourism. Recommendations for Italian language teaching are presented. Appended materials include lists of individuals and organizations; Italian courses in Australian universities; Italian in adult and continuing education courses; and a language attitude questionnaire. (Contains 428 references.) (MSE)

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Unlocking Australia's Language Potential

Profiles of 9 Key Languages in Australia

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Vol. 6 - Italian

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Unlocking Australia's Language Potential

PROFILES OF 9 KEY LANGUAGES IN AUSTRALIA

Volume 6: Italian

THE NATIONAL LANGUAGES & LITERACY INSTITUTE OF AUSTRALIA

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DEET

The National Languages and Literacy Institute of Australia Limited

The National Languages and Literacy Institute of Australia Limited (NLLIA) was established in 1990 as the Key Centre for Language Teaching and Research to meet the goals and principles of the 1987 National Policy on Languages. Under the 1991 Australian Language and Literacy Policy, the mandate of the NLLIA was modified to include a heightened focus on literacy.

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- regularly assessing language education needs by providing advisory and consultancy services to government, unions, business and the community on relevant language issues.

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FOREWORD

One of the consequences of the increased emphasis on language policy making from State and Federal governments in recent years has been the proliferation of ways of categorising languages. The nine languages featured in these profile studies were categorised as Languages of Wider Teaching.

There are obviously other ways in which the languages could have been classified. Any one of a large number of possible categories could have been used but this particular group of nine was listed in the National Policy on Languages as languages which either already had or could reasonably be predicted to have the majority of all languages candidates in Australia.

This particular group of languages could not otherwise be classified together. They represent therefore the vast bulk of the second language learning effort in Australian education. As such these languages consume the greatest proportion of the resources devoted to the teaching of second languages in this country and will do so for several years to come.

In addition to this quantitative rationale for grouping these nine, the following rationale supported this selection:

- that language/teaching efforts are to be harmonised with Australia's economic, national and external policy goals;
- that language teaching and learning efforts are to enhance Australia's place in Asia and the Pacific and its capacity to play its role as a full and active member of world forums; and
- that, for planning purposes, resources allocation efforts and the establishment of achievable long-term goals, choices must be made on language issues (National Policy on Languages 1987:124).

These nine were seen to combine internally orientated reasons for language study (intercultural, community bilingualism rationales) with perceived externally oriented reasons (economic and international relations rationales) with a pragmatic sense that only a selection from the very many possible languages that could be promoted, should be.

The nine languages selected were: Arabic, Modern Standard Chinese, French, German, Modern Greek, Indonesian/Malay, Italian, Japanese, and Spanish. In early 1990 the Australian Advisory Council on Languages and Multicultural Education which was charged with the responsibility for the implementation of the National Policy on Languages decided to review the teaching and place of these languages since their designation as Languages of Wider Teaching. Funding was provided under the Australian Second Language Learning Program for the conduct of profile studies of the nine.

The National Languages and Literacy Institute of Australia was successful in its bid for these funds and co-ordinated a national project of the research teams described in the volumes. The researchers and the teams that assisted them were scattered across Australia and the co-ordination of their efforts was a major

activity on its own. I wish to acknowledge the efforts of Dr Tony Liddicoat, Mr Athol Yates, Dr Pauline Bryant and other NLLIA staff for succeeding in this difficult task.

In addition, the NLLIA is producing a summary volume. This will present an overview of the nine language profiles and an analysis of the most interesting and revealing differences and similarities among them. This is being written by Dr Paulin Dijité of the University of Sydney.

These studies represent more than a review of the state of play after some years of designation of these nine languages as key languages. They promise to bring about a more precise and language specific form of planning for the teaching and learning of languages in Australian education and therefore could well represent a more mature phase in policy making itself. In recent years language policies have made only generic statements about individual, or groups of, languages. Since there is now a high level of consensus across Australia about the importance of Asian languages, the necessity of keeping strong European-world languages and the domestic value of multi-lingualism these profiles will probably focus attention on the particular issues that affect the 'condition' of individual languages considered important.

The classification, Languages of Wider Teaching is, however, no longer used. In the Australian Language and Literacy Policy issued by the Federal government in September 1991, the Commonwealth identified 14 languages; incorporating the present nine. These fourteen languages were called priority languages. Under the Commonwealth's Priority Languages Incentives Scheme education systems, the States and Territories select eight each as the basis of the funding support they receive from the Commonwealth under the Australian Language and Literacy Policy.

These languages are: Aboriginal Languages, Arabic, Modern Standard Chinese, French, German, Modern Greek, Indonesian/Malay, Italian, Japanese, Spanish, Russian, Thai, Korean and Vietnamese.

The NLLIA is extending the profile analysis contained in these volumes to a number of languages not presently surveyed. The NLLIA is about to commence profile analyse of Russian, Thai, Korean, Vietnamese and Hindi.

Joseph Lo Bianco
Director, NLLIA
March 1994

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Belinda Cotton, Sarah Hyman, Franko Leoni and Joanna Leoni undertook the transcription of many hours of interviews in Italian and in English.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Modern Australia is uniquely characterised by its cultural diversity ranging from the indigenous cultures of the Aboriginal nation to the Anglo-Celtic cultures and the many other cultures brought by other immigrant groups settling in Australia, including the Italian. Acknowledgment of this has contributed significantly to bringing forward the debate for an Australian republic that will explicitly recognise such diversity while highlighting Australian autonomy. This will help those who choose to settle in this country identify with it more directly. For example, in citizenship ceremonies allegiance would be sworn to Australia. At the same time Australia must be seen as not renouncing its multicultural choice, but as valuing all of its cultural and linguistic resources.

The extent and deeply rooted presence of the Italian community and the multitude of its activities and its contribution to Australian society has created a social environment which has generated an ongoing 'natural demand' for the teaching of the Italian language in Australia. This natural demand has historically not been met, except in the last decade or so. Contributing to this demand is the traditional motivation for learning Italian, based on the attraction of ancient and modern Italian culture and the position of Italian in the education system. Another major factor is the increasing technological and commercial presence of Italy on the world scene, and of Italian and Italo-Australian business in the Australian economy. For these reasons and because of the increasing numbers of second and third generation people of Italian descent, the demand for Italian is likely to continue.

Primary school

The importance of Italian in Australian education is evident from its instrumental role in the introduction of language in the primary school. Within schools Italian is the most widely studied language at primary level in all States. While the foundations for that development were laid in the 1970s when the community of the Italian-born reached its maximum numbers, the greatest increase in numbers in the schools occurred in the 1980s. The basic reasons for this development are due to the role of the community-based committees in meeting the demand for Italian classes by securing funds from the Australian and Italian Governments and other sources, and by organising insertion classes in schools.

Important too was the structure provided by the education officers based at the Italian Consulates and funded by the Italian Government, together with the provision of teaching materials from Italy, and more recently, the provision of in-service courses and professional development activities for teachers.

Development of Italian courses in primary schools was also due to initiatives of some State education departments, particularly NSW, Victoria and South Australia. These initiatives attempted to cater for the needs of language maintenance, although they did not attain the numbers of students that attend the insertion classes. After-hours initiatives towards language maintenance are carried out by the community-based committees in urban and many rural centres in all States.

At present there are signs that growth in numbers of students of Italian in the primary school is slowing considerably overall, although there are some areas which have only recently begun to meet the natural demand.

Secondary school

The presence of Italian courses in the secondary school has a longer history than in the primary school. Italian had a weak and patchy presence during the 1960s, but the natural demand stemming from the Italian community ensured its gradual but constant growth up to the present. This contributed to maintaining the numbers of language students in Australia despite the disastrous reforms of the 1960s and the changes in university entrance requirements which excluded language studies from the core curriculum in the secondary school. This is why today the proportion of students studying languages for the HSC, including Italian, is unsatisfactory by comparison with other countries. In most other countries it is compulsory to study a second language in secondary school.

University

Like the secondary school, the initial Italian presence in the university in Australia was generated mainly by traditional motivations related to the position of Italian language and culture in the development of Western history and culture. The natural demand from the Italian community jolted a very significant growth in the 1970s and 1980s which brought some presence of Italian into the great majority of Australian tertiary institutions. Although there are difficulties getting accurate data on students numbers, it can be safely assumed that the numbers of students have increased and so have the range and type of courses offered. While the variety of courses available is remarkable and courses have attempted to embrace professional levels in such areas as language teaching, interpreting and translation, developments have tended to be horizontal, favouring early undergraduate courses as against honours and post-graduate. The rapid growth in Italian in the primary school has not produced in the tertiary area a corresponding interest in teacher training and language pedagogy or research into learning.

Much is still to be done in tertiary institutions to reflect the genuine demands of the students' unsatisfied needs, including those who look for the cultural role of Italian in particular areas, such as art or music, the search for identity, a better definition of Italian in Western culture and art, and now the increasing demand for Italian to meet instrumental needs of an economic or professional nature, including business and tourism. It is very difficult to see how this development can occur in the face of continuing erosion of vital resources away from language departments in the universities, as well as from the humanities in general. Indeed Italian and other languages departments are having to cut back on course provisions rather than being given the resources to take on the desirable new directions.

Adult education

As a barometer of natural demand, the presence of Italian studies in adult and continuing education shows a consistently high level of interest. The only area that seems to be impervious to questions of supply and demand in languages appears to have been that of TAFE. Perhaps this is due to the fact that much of the needs for the Italian language in areas connected with the traditional trades have been met by the first generation of Italian speakers who supplied the

language skills required in the market place. The same can be said for Italo-Australian business. With the first generation now getting older, these needs are not going to be met much longer, unless something is done.

Teacher training, curriculum and materials

One of the major shortcomings identified in the area of curriculum is the scant attention paid to language maintenance. Especially in the secondary curriculum, there is also a lack of any defined content to form a base for the language curriculum, particularly in the area of culture. Current attempts to design a curriculum, which are certainly needed, particularly in the primary area, need to take account of existing materials and the experience of teachers.

There is a wide variety of materials now available for the teaching of Italian. The gaps are mainly in audio-visual and computer-based software, where good quality items are highly desirable given the stated intention of education authorities to develop distance education.

Clearly there is a need for greater integration between faculties involved with teacher education, and those with language and linguistic departments, to bring about innovating practice in teaching and language acquisition research.

Insertion and after-hours classes

In passing total moneys and control to Government and Catholic education authorities rather than to the recognised ethnic education organisations, the White Paper is on the right track towards resolving some problems, in the sense of providing funds for language teaching to education authorities, but is thereby creating a situation that risks the loss to the schools of the large resources and voluntary contribution of the Italo-Australian community. This is because further constraints and controls have been imposed on the community providers of Italian programs both within and outside schools, where previously these organisations had autonomy, especially in their education activities outside the school. At the same time they are not being given a role in the decision making process, e.g. in distribution of funds, quality control, input and advice on syllabus and materials. In other words the providers are asked to do most of the work, but with very little say in what they do.

The role of the Italian Government

The Italian Government through the Cultural Agreement has constantly increased since the 1970s its contributions in terms of funds, materials and personnel to the teaching of Italian in Australia while extending the benefits to all learners regardless of background. The Italian Government has become cognisant of the need to negotiate not only at the national level, as it has been doing, but also directly with the departments of school education in the States. However most of their contribution is channelled through community associations who would be less enthusiastic about sharing their resources in the face of a drastically reduced role.

The very good relationship between Italy and Australia in terms of scholarships and some special in-service courses in Italy for teachers of Italian from Australia is not fully exploited in the range of educational exchanges of teachers and students. The economic and cultural relationship and potential between the two

countries could be more adequately represented in the area of educational exchanges.

Italian as a language for trade, technology and tourism

The significance of Italian for trade and commercial purposes of benefit to Australia has been largely neglected in the past in the framing of policy as well as curriculum, professional education and course design. This Profile gives a concrete dimension to this aspect of Italian, although the picture needs further research. There is a surprising range of commercial, trade and industrial reasons for young people to learn Italian today. This need has been traditionally and unobtrusively fulfilled by the linguistic skills of the first generation of native speakers of Italian, but this generation is growing older and in the absence of fresh migration from Italy their role needs to be taken over by speakers of Italian educated in Australia.

RECOMMENDATIONS

General

Recommendation 1
Continuation of Commonwealth support is recommended for the teaching of Italian which is, after English, the most widely used Australian community language, a pivotal language for the Humanities and one of the most viable languages of the European Community. The teaching of Italian serves well the multicultural objective which includes the cultural rights of minorities and the preservation of national linguistic resources. Italian also contributes enormously to the educational objective of having all Australians learn a second language for a wide variety of social, cultural and economic purposes.

Recommendation 2
The Commonwealth per capita grant for insertion and after-hours Italian language classes should be increased to (at least) $60 per student/per year. This increase is to be used for improving program quality and upgrading language skills and qualifications of teachers of Italian both in school and after-hours.

Recommendation 3
Support is needed for innovative and experimental programs including research into program outcomes and Italian language acquisition outcomes.

The Role of the Italo-Australian Community

Recommendation 4
The positive role played by Italian community-based associations and their contribution to language education in schools and after-hours should be maintained and extended beyond the primary school. Both Commonwealth and State financial support for these committees' work should be at least commensurate with the funds those associations raise, for educational purposes, from the Italian Government and the community at large in order to meet the considerable natural demand for Italian in Australia.

Recommendation 5
The dedication, commitment and success of the foundation Italian language teachers should be officially recognised by both the Italian and Australian authorities.

Australian-Italian Cultural Agreement

Recommendation 6
The triennial programs under the bilateral Cultural Agreement between Australia and Italy could be better used by both parties for the purpose of enhancing language teaching and learning, particularly through student exchange programs similar to those operating within the European Community.

as well as for the exchange and in-country professional development of Italian language teachers in schools and universities.

Recommendation 7
Increased levels of exchange should include working holidays for young people, and in-country apprenticeships in areas of mutual strength.

Recommendation 8
State Governments through the appropriate channels should negotiate an increased presence of Italian advisers to cover the various levels of education. The current sole adviser per major State is clearly insufficient to meet needs and demands.

Professional Issues, Curriculum and Materials

Recommendation 9
Support should be given to national co-ordination of activities involving teachers of Italian in curriculum development, as well as professional development and upgrading of qualifications. NLLIA as a national structure could provide the framework. The considerable amount of material and expertise built up at different times and places should inform such initiatives, with strong encouragement given to community representation.

Recommendation 10
Teachers of Italian are seeking more flexible postgraduate courses and more opportunities for study of Italian overseas including teacher exchange programs with Italy. Particular attention should be given to country teachers who may have fewer opportunities for practice in speaking the language at a sufficient level.

Recommendation 11
The primary to secondary syllabus should take into account and respond to the diverse competencies and needs of students of Italian. It should include a core of Italian and Italo-Australian culture, society and issues.

Recommendation 12
Examinations should offer a range of levels as well as reflecting different competences.

Recommendation 13
In the area of resources teachers identified the need for more oral/aural resources in Italian (audio and video) and at the same time for these and other teaching materials to be suited to the Australian classroom. Joint Australian-Italian publishing ventures should be encouraged for marketing Australian-developed teaching material which can be adopted in other countries.

Recommendation 14
A direct grant to students (or parents) rather than the schools for the purchase of textbooks should be explored and tried out to stimulate autonomous responsibility for learning and a love for reading.

Language Maintenance

Recommendation 15
Special attention should be paid to language maintenance activities, both within the schools and in the community in order for the second generation to succeed in forging connections between Italy and Australia to the advantage of both countries. This would require a high level of linguistic competence in standard Italian as well as regional and other language varieties used in Italy and Australia.

Recommendation 16
Language and culture programs should be offered to adults and mature-age learners who may wish to update their cultural and linguistic knowledge of present day Italy. There should be provision for special Italian and ESL programs designed to meet the needs and interests of the mature and elderly Italian women whose language needs have largely been ignored.

Accreditation

Recommendation 17
The language competence of an individual, whether already existing or acquired in after-hour programs, once properly assessed, should be recognised by schools and accrediting bodies. This is already happening in some parts of Australia.

1 INTRODUCTION

The present study on the teaching of Italian in Australia has been carried out in the context of the 1987 National Policy on Languages (NPL) which identified Italian as one of the nine Languages of Wider Teaching. Funds were made available by the Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) to the National Languages and Literacy Institute of Australia Limited (NLLIA) in 1991-92 to carry out a study of each of those nine languages under the Australian Language and Literacy Policy.

The Italian project was assigned to Giovanni and Helen Andreoni of the University of New England, as Principal Researchers and Bruno Di Biase of the University of Western Sydney, Macarthur, as Principal Researcher and overall Co-ordinator. Bronwen Dyson was engaged as Researcher with the project, and substantially authored some of the chapters. The Project was informed by a steering committee established in March 1992 with representation from the teaching profession and the community from States and Territories. The committee was encouraged to contribute information, and to comment on drafts, which they did with a highly commendable sense of commitment.

Aim and objectives

In accordance with the NLLIA Guidelines for the profiles of the nine languages, the Italian project was to be an Italian language education profile, whose central concerns should be:

- The background, position and quality of provision for and trends in Italian in the education system (especially since the NPL). The project sought quantitative data about language education at the primary, secondary and tertiary level, as well as Technical and Further Education (TAFE) and adult education and provision in ethnic schools and after-hours classes. The qualitative data to be sought about language education included issues in teacher education and teacher qualifications; teaching materials (quality, availability, suitability and areas of need); and of testing instruments (examinations and assessment).
- Factors promoting or inhibiting Italian language teaching since NPL, and reasons for the level of demand, including projections for the future. The aim was to assess the objectives of the teaching of Italian, and the effect of State and national language policies on Italian, and to examine language issues specific to Italian. A survey of Year 11 students who were studying or who had studied Italian aimed to assess the attitudinal factors which led them to continue or discontinue study after Year 10.
- Resources and funds available for the teaching of Italian at the various levels of education, including university funding and extrinsic sources of funds such as the Italian Government.
- The domestic situation for the Italian language, including the local need for language education and the availability and potential of Italian language resources. Drawing on census and other data, the project aimed to develop a profile of the Italian speech community in Australia, analysing size and rate of change in Italian group numbers, projected migration patterns, distribution of Italian populations, language maintenance and language shift, attitudes towards learning the language, perceived ethnolinguistic vitality and the preparedness of the community to contribute to language learning.

- The importance of Italian for Australia in the world context, including the external and internal economic need, as well as possible diplomatic and military requirements. Estimated size of the world community speaking Italian, and a comparative examination of the teaching of Italian in the world; trade patterns with Italy and the European Community context; the role of Italian in scientific, technological or other fields.
- An overall synthesis of factors involved in the provision of language programs and their significance in Australia.

From a more personal point of view of the workers in the project, there was also a desire to fill in the picture, at least to some extent, of the successful integration of Italian within the Australian mainstream education institutions, as well as to present the case for Italian, both as a central language for education in Australia and in terms of language maintenance and development within the Italo-Australian community.

Methodology

A critical characteristic of Italian that makes it quite different from other languages in education has been the large role played by the community-based organisations interested in education who channelled human and financial resources into expanding the provision of Italian programs, particularly in the primary school.

Guidance and data for the project came on the one hand from the NLLIA and meetings of the Nine Languages Project in 1991 and 1992 and on the other hand from the Italian Profile Project Committee members who received and commented on preliminary reports (H. and G. Andreoni's and Bronwen Dyson's) and also offered information and original written contributions.

Division of tasks

It was decided to divide the research task into two distinct areas of responsibility. Principal Researchers, Helen and Giovanni Andreoni, would be responsible for the research into the teaching of Italian outside the above mentioned institutions, including Italian insertion classes run by ethnic community associations and the teaching of Italian through continuing and adult education. The two Principal Researchers needed to proceed immediately with their side of the task since they were planning to leave Australia before the end of March 1992.

The Co-ordinator would look specifically at the teaching of Italian in education systems. This refers to State departments of education schools, Catholic systemic and non-systemic schools and other Independent schools as well as higher education institutions such as universities and colleges of TAFE. He would also be responsible for the collection and consolidation of statistical data for the project as a whole. Given prior 1991 commitments the Co-ordinator would devote the necessary time to Italian Profile Project tasks as from first semester 1992.

Researcher Bronwen Dyson was engaged to help this 'institutional' part of the report and to provide a background paper summarising the main readings for the project proposed by the NLLIA Directorate. She was engaged also by three other language projects for a similar task. In addition to her preliminary report which provided much of the content for the early chapters, she also contributed the best part of two other chapters.

A project of this size could not proceed without encountering a number of problems with logistics and resources. Because the members were spread across Australia it was impossible for the Italian Profile Project Committee to meet and exchange ideas. Because of commitments the Principal Researchers began their work in October 1991, and delivered their draft in March 1992, just prior to departing to meet an overseas commitment. Their draft was circulated to the Committee for comment.

Italian in education systems

The Co-ordinator relied on NLLIA Directorate and research centres for the bulk of the data being collected centrally from education systems and universities, as well as contacts with the network of Italian language advisers and officers in education departments. In addition to the usual literature search in libraries, much information came from participants to the National Italian Language Advisers Seminar held at the NLLIA's Language Acquisition Research Centre (LARC) in early November 1991, representing all States as well as the Italian Embassy and Consulates. Many individuals commented in response to press releases, radio interviews and articles in community newspapers and professional bulletins. Consultations, mainly informal, were held with language teachers, university colleagues, officers of education authorities, parents and community members.

The survey of Year 11 students envisaged in the objectives was co-ordinated by the NLLIA Directorate who then made available the data from the respondents studying Italian. For professional issues relating to teachers, the Co-ordinator used the data from a questionnaire on professional needs of language teachers run by NLLIA/LARC. A search of major Italian language newspapers in Australia between the end of March and early June 1992 provided an objective measure of functioning structures and activities of the Italian-Australian community.

Italian education activities in the community and its contribution to school education

The methodology chosen for this part, based on oral history, direct interviews (and transcription) and questionnaire involved much travelling. The research involved a mixture of literature search and analysis, and exhaustive field work. It was not confined to the teaching of the Italian language, because it was felt that language was closely intertwined with the life and experience of the Italian community.

In addition to library resources, the researchers drew on unpublished material and experiences accumulated over the last 15 years through their work specifically in Italian communities and in the more general area of language policy, the teaching of languages other than English (LOTEs) and multicultural education.

Field trips and interviews specific to the Italian Language Profile began in late October 1991 and finished in February 1992. The Italian Embassy in Canberra supplied a list of community providers of language classes in Australia, chiefly in urban centres. Each organisation was sent a questionnaire and background information. This written information was followed up where possible with a recorded interview.

For organisations involved in the teaching of Italian in country areas, the researchers referred to *Directory of Ethnic Community Organisations in Australia* by the Federal Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs (1989). The researchers also drew on their own contacts with Italian communities in rural areas. Lyn Trad of the Office of Multicultural Affairs in Brisbane helped in locating interviewees in Northern Queensland. Detective work enabled the researchers to deduce that there must be a large Italian community in a particular area either because of the history and/or the economics of the region. Persistence and chance had a part to play when Italian communities were located because of newspapers observed in an isolated newsagent, or because of the smell of freshly roasted coffee, or because of an impressive range of Italian small goods in the middle of *Woop Woop* (Australian idiom meaning somewhere very isolated and distant from cities).

The researchers sought out Italian communities in rural areas because of their belief that too little is known of their experiences in and contributions to life in Australia. They too are part of the group of dedicated people who are determined to pass on their knowledge of Italian both to their own community and to fellow Australians.

The extent of the field work for this part of the profile can be gauged by the following figures:

Total number of kilometres travelled by car:	22,000
Total number of interviewees	143
Total number of transcripts of interviews	48
Number of questionnaires sent out	27
Number of questionnaires returned	10

Writing tasks

It was felt important to maintain a balance between the descriptive, analytical and advocacy role of this study, and to maintain a degree of unity of style, given that there were a number of contributors. The draft report by the Principal Researchers, which was concerned mainly with Italian education activities in the community and its contribution to school education, formed the basis for sections of Chapters 1 and 2, and related to community-based initiatives in Italian language teaching, correspondence and adult education and after-hours classes and insertion classes. Their report also contributed to other areas of the Profile and provided the bulk of the Glossary and the pertinent appendices.

Most of Chapters 3 and 6 were written by Bronwen Dyson. Her preliminary report included a substantial literature review and informs significantly other parts of the earlier chapters.

There is some apparent overlap of topics particularly in Chapters 1 and 2, where the first deals with the current position of Italian teaching across and beyond education systems, while Chapter 2 takes a diachronic point of view and attempts to trace the historical development of the teaching of the Italian language in Australia. The headings and subheadings are descriptive of the content. This will assist readers to select what there may be of interest for them in the report.

In his role of Project Co-ordinator, Bruno Di Biase is responsible for the consolidation of the data, all tables and figures in the body of the report, and for

the writing of the chapters and sections not already mentioned, and for the overall drawing together of the report. The final effort of reformulation and editing was carried out jointly with the writer Alison Lyssa.

1.1 Italian in Australian Education

The challenge facing Australia in the 1990s and beyond is how to sustain its economy without undermining, in the process, both its natural environment and its cultural bases.

The national debate has been dominated by arguments attributable to an economic rationalist philosophy which in its most extreme forms would harness all of the country's resources, whether natural, human, cultural or institutional, towards economic goals and priorities.

The history of Italian in the Australian education system in this century, like that of most other languages which share a minority status in Australian society, may be broadly divided into three phases. A first phase, which begins with Federation in 1901, can be characterised as the assimilationist phase. Minority languages and cultures were at best ignored. Italian would only make its sporadic appearances at the margins of the education system as one of the languages that had an impact on the mainstream Western culture. Indeed Latin had precisely that role and was well established in the education system both in the university and in the secondary school. Reflecting in part the role Latin had played as the language of an important culture, Italian was formally introduced into mainstream education, beginning at the tertiary and secondary levels.

A second phase, multiculturalism, developed from the 1970s to the mid 1980s. Italian was a standard bearer of this phase. Its unprecedented growth, particularly in the primary schools, confirmed the importance of language teaching, and ran counter to the prevailing tendency to marginalise languages in the Australian education systems.

Among the numerous reasons why Italian assumed the role of pathfinder was the presence of a large Italian speaking community with a strong desire to maintain its language. There was also a body of teachers arguing for the importance of children studying their first language so that their conceptual development would not be hampered by their inability to understand the language of the school. Italian became a symbol of multicultural Australia. Because of its multicultural and affective value, Italian is easily adopted in TV programs for children: it is used for instance in children's programs such as the ABC-TV *Playschool*. In a climate of positive acceptance of multiculturalism, Italian was chosen by many people as a language to learn themselves or to encourage their children to learn.

The effects of multiculturalism are still very much alive, boosted by the broad presence of the Italian community and its social networks.

The third and current phase, which began in the mid 1980s, was that of economic rationalism. One of its consequences has been that priority has been given to

areas in the education process whose outcomes are considered to be directly connected with employment and/or training. Government support tends to favour languages that are deemed to be commercially useful. This process leads to the loss of focus on educational, social and cultural reasons for learning languages, and may have negative consequences for language learning as a whole, however unintended these consequences may be.

The lean utilitarian rationale for learning a language, coupled with the insistence, expectations and pressures for students to learn Asian languages, may be jeopardising the survival of the language resources Australia already possesses. There is no guarantee that the loss of those resources will be compensated by a growth in resources in critical Asian languages. As with other areas of learning and human endeavour, the motivation for learning a language is the positive value given to it. This value is not necessarily expressed or expressible in terms of money, but rather in terms which are cultural, social, educational and even personal and emotional.

Learning a language and the culture(s) it expresses requires the time, energy, resources and dedication of learners, teachers and institutions. In no profession would one expect to create overnight the necessary knowledge, practice and expertise.

Yet in regard to language learning and teaching what seems to be the dominant perception is that not much time is needed to learn a language. It is unrealistic to expect that a few weeks' crash course or at best a few months in Japan, for instance, will be sufficient to turn a teacher of French or Italian into a teacher of Japanese. A further pernicious implication of this policy, one that seems to be affecting adversely the morale of teachers of French or Italian, is that they are made to feel these are the wrong languages for making a career in language teaching. Such a perception can hardly contribute to enhancing the status of language learning in Australia.

In the Australian school system there are still thousands of students who never study any language. According to the DEET *National Survey of Language Learning in Australian Schools 1988* only 13% of primary school children and just under 30% of secondary students studied a LOTE in 1988 and less than 25% of schools offered a LOTE. In Year 12 and universities languages are even more neglected. Less than 12% of Year 12 students studied a LOTE in 1990 and less than 1% of higher education students completed a language unit in that year.

Italian has a vital continuing role in language education in Australia. At the 1986 census, more than 600,000 Australian residents were of Italian ancestry, roughly half of them born in Italy, with a few thousands born in Egypt, Malta or South America, and the rest born in Australia. Italian is popular both among the second generation students and as a second language, with learners coming from a wide variety of language backgrounds including English. More than 260,000 young people in Australia were studying the Italian language in 1991. For some of them the opportunity to study Italian at school means being able to acquire the more formal speaking and writing skills in a language which they use, in various forms, at home and in the immediate community, and which unquestionably belongs to their background. However, for many Australian school-children, especially at primary school, Italian provides the first educational experience in learning a second language. As with other community languages, learners do

not need to go very far to listen to the language or try out what they learn, thanks to the presence of Italian speakers within the school and community, on local radio and television, in films and community events.

Italian also has a good academic tradition and connections with other fields, particularly in the Arts. In highlighting the role of Italian as the hub of humanistic studies in Australia, Scott restates Peter Nichols' thesis that within the tradition of the Western world, 'culturally we are all Italy's children' (Scott 1992:113).

1.2 Italian in Australia

To understand why Italian is the most widespread LOTE in the Australian education system, one must refer firstly to the number of Italian speakers in Australia, where according to the 1986 census Italian is, after English, the language most widely spoken at home (see Table 1.1). As reported by Clyne (1991:249), Italian speakers numbered 415,765, which is 2.6% of a total Australian population of 15,602,156. Victoria, the State where the highest number live, and NSW both have over 100,000 speakers, followed by South Australia, Western Australia and Queensland with numbers ranging from 26,000 to 48,000. Numbers are lower in the remaining States, but nevertheless significant given their smaller size and population. The ACT has nearly 4,000 speakers, followed by Tasmania and the Northern Territory with more than 1,000 each. This distribution of speakers, represented in Figure 1.1, is significant as it parallels fairly closely the historical development and geographical distribution of Italian teaching and learning in Australia.

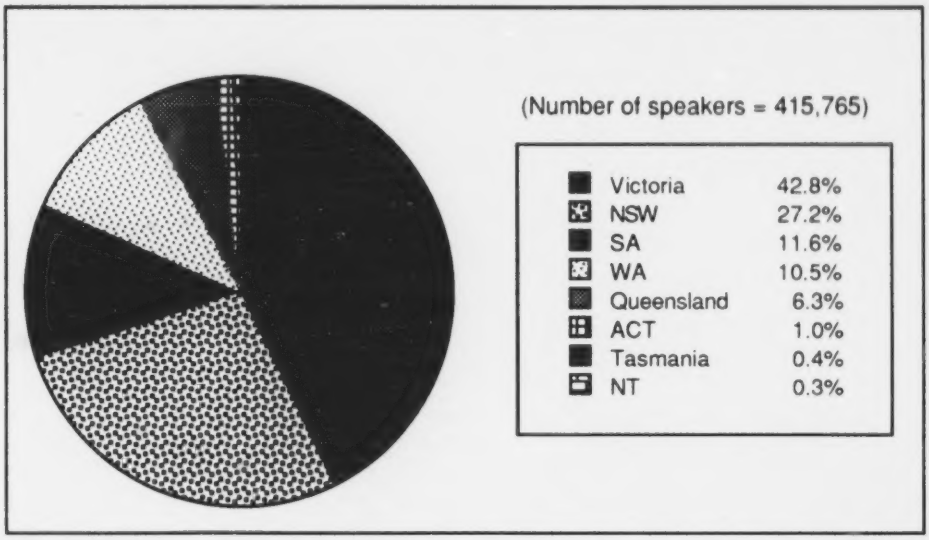

Figure 1.1
Speakers of Italian in Australia in 1986

By and large the pattern of growth in the teaching and learning of Italian does tend to follow the pattern of distribution of the Italian communities. So in general the larger the community the more the language is represented particularly at primary school but also at all other levels. Thus, for example, Victoria, the state with the largest Italian community, is also the first-ranking State as regards the presence of Italian at all levels of education.

	Arabic	Chinese	French	German	Greek	Indones./ Malay	Italian	Japanese	Spanish
NSW	88,475	66,974	20,256	35,324	96,652	8,180	113,203	5,801	42,783
Vic	24,515	40,443	14,803	32,665	128,562	3,883	178,097	3,018	18,556
Qld	1,590	9,696	6,807	14,526	10,491	1,404	26,115	1,573	4,770
WA	1,446	11,389	5,375	8,206	5,864	4,084	43,590	1,048	3,231
SA	2,415	5,833	2,994	14,910	28,622	881	48,179	440	2,114
Tas	204	820	804	1,999	1,508	296	1,590	123	228
NT	69	1,965	547	992	2,747	475	1,040	83	391
ACT	473	1,980	1,204	2,654	3,026	684	3,951	325	1,888
Total	119,187	139,100	52,790	111,276	277,472	19,887	415,765	12,411	73,961

Table 1.1
Speakers (at home) of Italian and other eight languages of wider teaching in Australia in 1986
Source: Clyne 1991:248-251

If, as is contended here, languages and culture are a national resource, Italian is a great national asset that has helped to build Australia as a multicultural society, and has added 'colour, variety and sophistication ... at a time when the importance of useable language skills and of informal ... as well as formal links for Australia's international political relations with other countries and for its overseas trade is becoming increasingly evident' (Gatt-Rutter and Cavallaro 1991:78).

Another significant fact is the pattern of concentration of Italians in urban settings, although large pockets are also found in scattered areas of rural Australia. Nearly 85% of Italian-born live in the capital cities, as happens with most Italophones regardless of their place of birth. Consequently most mainstream teaching of Italian occurs in urban settings. Today Italian is taught in every Australian State and Territory both within mainstream educational institutions at every level as well as in after-hours ethnic schools and continuing adult education classes.

In 1991 about one in twelve students in mainstream primary and secondary education was studying Italian. This makes Italian the most widely taught of the 'languages of wider teaching' in Australia, with 272,080 students (Lo Bianco 1987:125). This total has been calculated on the basis of data collected from a variety of sources and includes Commonwealth-funded 'insertion classes'. In the absence of a central agency regularly engaged in collecting such information, the data are likely to be somewhat incomplete and the total is therefore likely to be understated.

The State by State distribution of these students is represented in Figure 1.2. As shown, exactly half of the quarter of a million students of Italian are concentrated in Victoria, followed by NSW, Western Australia, South Australia and Queensland accounting for almost 98% with the Territories and Tasmania sharing the remainder.

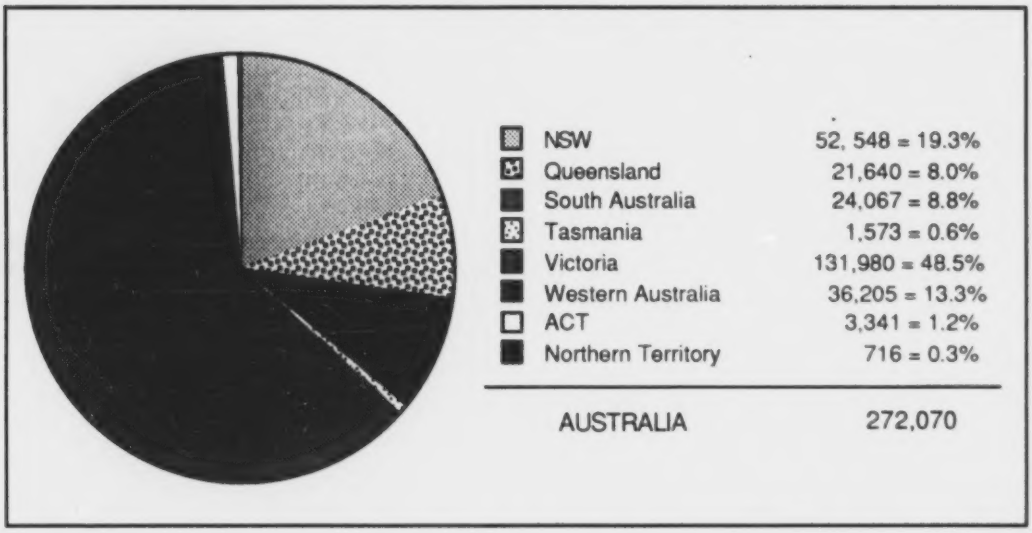
NSW 52, 548 = 19.3%
Queensland 21,640 = 8.0%
South Australia 24,067 = 8.8%
Tasmania 1,573 = 0.6%
Victoria 131,980 = 48.5%
Western Australia 36,205 = 13.3%
ACT 3,341 = 1.2%
Northern Territory 716 = 0.3%
AUSTRALIA 272,070

Figure 1.2
Italian in primary and secondary schools by State in 1991

It may not be easy for Italian to maintain its numerical strength in the school systems. The fact that there are large numbers of students does present problems of balancing quantity and quality. There are also tensions between the education systems and the community education bodies who still find themselves considered outsiders even though they have been running Italian classes within the schools for over ten years. Despite these tensions, the fact that so many are learning Italian confirms the multicultural character of modern Australian education where the strongest, but by no means sole, rationale for teaching Italian is the complex set of historical, social, economic and cultural bonds created by the presence of Italians in the Australian society.

When looked at from the point of view of systems, Italian is more prominent in Catholic than in Government schools. This fact is even more apparent when one considers that the Government system is about two and a half times the size of the Catholic one (cf. number of schools in Table 1.2). In all, only a small percentage (under 4%) of students of Italian are found in Independent schools. However, this is not without significance, both because this is the smallest of the three systems - and operates mainly in the secondary area - and because of the prestige often enjoyed by those schools.

	Primary	Secondary	Total	%
Government Schools	90,378	28,300	118,678	43.62%
Catholic Schools	105,140	38,638	143,778	52.84%
Independent Schools	3,218	6,396	9,614	3.53%
Total	198,746	73,334	272,080	100%
Percentage	73.05%	26.95%	100%	

Table 1.2
Students of Italian in primary and secondary schools across education systems in Australia in 1991

Of the students of Italian within the school system, the great majority, over three quarters, is found in the primary schools, and only just over a quarter in the

secondary schools (see Table 1.2). The difference is enormous and is bound up with developments that occurred during the 1980s, namely the growth of 'insertion' classes (see Glossary). These classes account for the majority of primary programs and are counted as part of the mainstream because they are conducted in the normal day school and within the school timetable. Nevertheless their position in the mainstream day school is ambiguous. The major differences between insertion programs and other mainstream primary programs have more to do with modes of funding and management than educational factors.

Excluded from the above table are the after-hours (ethnic) classes in Italian. These will be treated in a separate section, as will insertion classes and the whole range of Italian teaching activity for adults within and outside formal tertiary institutions. Had these been included, the 1991 figure for learners of Italian in Australia would easily exceed the 300,000 mark.

The study of Italian at university level is also widespread. There are twenty-five universities offering Italian as part of degree courses with at least one tertiary institution in every State and Territory. However, less than half of the twenty-five universities offer honours, masters, or postgraduate courses in Italian, and very few students enrol at those levels. Indeed six of the universities offer less than a full undergraduate series of courses. Thus Italian is a subject which is typically found at undergraduate level. This fact necessarily influences any attempt to promote quality and improve outcomes in Italian teaching because few people choose to specialise in Italian at higher levels.

1.2.1 'Natural Demand' for Italian

Growing professional and commercial activity is increasing the demand for Italian in Australia. The sheer number of people studying Italian at all levels creates a healthy demand for teachers which in turn requires high standards of professionalism among teachers. This demand is not likely to decrease in the immediate future because of the existence in Australia of a large second generation of people of Italian background, whose strong presence generates continuing interest in the language. Furthermore the volume of trade between Italy and Australia is growing as is the number of tourists from Italy. The combination of these two factors, namely a large and active community and a significant level of trade and tourism exchange, generate what we shall call in this profile a 'natural demand' for high quality Italian-English services: teachers, interpreters, tourist guides, hospitality industry operatives, financial advisers and so on. This demand does not seem to be matched by supply in the higher educational structures and at the government policy level. Indeed, resources for the teaching of non-Asian languages in universities are shrinking.

In Australian universities it is rare for Italian departments to offer either vocational courses, such as interpreting and translating, or courses which service other departments, except perhaps music or fine arts, although the situation in this respect is changing (Leal et al. 1991: 78-83). Only five out of the twenty-six universities currently offer vocational courses in Italian and some of these appear to be at risk, such as those for language teachers or interpreters in South Australia. Without a more widespread development of vocational courses, it is difficult to see how tertiary institutions can fill the demand for Italian teachers or indeed other professionals who require high levels of competence and skills in the language.

The same difficulty occurs in the TAFE system which does not appear to be fulfilling the specifically vocational demand for Italian either, although demand for the language is considerable. Italian is the fourth most popular language but courses are mostly of a generalist nature with few vocationally relevant or special purpose courses. Unfortunately the current trend appears to be towards a further contraction of the already weak presence of languages in such institutions, and this is negatively affecting the development of much needed vocational competencies in this language.

Among the principal problems emerging from the analysis of relative numbers and distribution of students of Italian are the striking imbalances and lack of continuity in the teaching of Italian. This is to be understood in two senses. Firstly, a large presence of Italian teaching in the primary school does not find its natural continuity in the secondary school, and the comparatively smaller tertiary sector is as yet unable to meet the demand for appropriately qualified and linguistically competent teachers, particularly for the primary school. Secondly, there is the discontinuity in the availability of the subject which affects the secondary school and the university. Consequently only a tiny proportion of beginning students actually complete their Italian studies to the final year at secondary or tertiary levels.

Another problem which can be anticipated from examining key points in educational structures is the contraction in student numbers where Italian may have reached its maximum expansion, such as in the primary schools of Victoria and NSW. This slowing down is partly counterbalanced by growth in other areas, for example in particular geographical regions, such as Western Australia, and in particular levels in the school system, such as junior secondary in Victoria, where potential demand for Italian has not previously been met.

The remainder of this chapter will be devoted to a quantitative analysis of the present distribution of Italian across levels, systems and States as well as other less central yet important Italian language education activities.

1.3 Primary Schools

The LOTE most extensively taught in Australian primary schools today is Italian. In 1991 there were just under 200,000 primary school age children who were taught Italian in day-schools during ordinary school hours. This is the highest number ever recorded in Australia for any LOTE in primary school. The total includes insertion classes, which take place during ordinary school time and which undoubtedly cover the majority of children and teachers.

Italian is more likely to be found in Catholic schools than in other kinds of schools, although in some States, such as NSW, Government schools have a higher number of students taking Italian courses. When it is considered that the number of Government schools is roughly three times that of the non-government schools (Table 1.3), the presence of Italian in the Catholic school system is even more striking.

Schools*	Government		Non-Government		Total
	Total	%**	Total	%	
Primary	5,595	78.4%	1,539	21.6%	7,134
Secondary	1,218	74.4%	419	25.6%	1,637
Mixed	382	46.3%	443	53.7%	825
Total	7,195	75.2%	2,401	24.8%	9,596
Students	Government		Non-Government		Total
Primary	1,274,400	76.5%	413,000	24.5%	1,687,400
Secondary	903,100	69.7%	392,300	30.3%	1,295,400
Total	2,177,500	73.0%	805,300	27.0%	2,982,800

Table 1.3
Students of Italian in Government and Non-Government Schools in Australia in 1987
** Special Schools have not been included in the calculation*
*** Proportion is of government to non-government schools*
Source: DEET (1989:1). Data refers to 1987 which as been chosen for the purposes of this report as representing a median value for the last ten years

For this reason it is often thought that there are more children from Italian backgrounds in Catholic schools, whereas the number of children of Italian speaking background (ISB) is about equally divided between the two systems. On the contrary, throughout Australia there are probably more ISB children in Government schools. However, as a proportion of the school population, the presence of ISB children is far greater in Catholic schools, and this is one of the major reasons why Italian is, effectively, the second language of the Australian Catholic school system as a whole.

Victoria has the largest ethnic population and the largest ISB population of any State. It has also the highest proportion of primary children studying languages. Almost half of all primary school children studying Italian are found therefore in Victoria (Table 1.4) where Italian is studied by some 21% of the primary school population. In that State in 1990 there were 198 Catholic primary schools with nearly 60,000 pupils (i.e. 56% of all students in that system) studying Italian, most of them in insertion classes funded through *Comitato Assistenza Italiano* (COASIT), or the Italo-Australian Foundation. Government schools in Victoria, compared with those in other States, have the highest number (over 30,000) and proportion (about 11%) of primary pupils studying Italian. Compared with the number in Catholic schools, however, most of these pupils are not in insertion classes, but in school-based programs which use supernumerary teachers regularly employed by the Department of School Education.

	Number of pupils by State attending Italian classes in primary school									
	NSW	Qld	SA	Tas	Vic	WA	ACT	NT	Total	%
Government	26,379	9,781	8,009	398	31,178	13,700	613	320	90,378	45.5%
Catholic	14,500	9,444	8,775	389	57,904	12,270	1,858	--	10,5140	52.9%
Independent	1,603	--	864	--	438	313	--	--	3,218	1.6%
Total	42,482	19,225	17,648	787	89,520	26,283	2,471	320	198,736	
%	21.4%	9.7%	8.9%	0.4%	45.1%	13.2%	1.2%	0.2%		100%
Population of State as % of Australian population	34%	14%	8%	3%	26%	10%	2%	1%		

Table 1.4
Students of Italian in primary schools in Australia in 1991
1. Victoria: Catholic schools figure is for 1990.
2. NSW: Independent schools figure is for 1992
3. Northern Territory: 'Government' figure includes all schools
4. Tasmania: Figures are for 1992. 'Catholic' includes all non-government schools
5. Queensland: 'Catholic' includes all non-government schools

In all other States and Territories there are considerable numbers of primary children studying Italian in broad parallel with the distribution of population and presence of Italian speakers. Thus in NSW and Western Australia, Italian has a strong presence particularly in Government primary schools, followed by Queensland and South Australia where pupils are more or less evenly divided between Catholic and Government schools. The ACT, Tasmania and Northern Territory primary schools also have a presence of Italian which is significant relative to the size of the population (Table 1.4).

Independent primary schools have not adopted insertion classes to the extent of the other systems, but there has been some interest shown in Italian. In NSW, the State which accounts for about half of the total of primary students of Italian in Independent schools in Australia, there are, according to 1992 figures, eight Independent schools teaching Italian from Kindergarten to Year 6 including one bilingual pre-school, International Grammar, which is perhaps unique in Australia for its policy of starting bilingual learning in pre-school. In NSW the equivalent of eleven full-time teachers teach 1,603 students in Independent schools (see Table 1.4). The presence of Italian in these schools is tenuous and will very much depend on the interest of parents. One of the schools, for example, was planning to terminate Italian at the end of 1992 and introduce Japanese (personal communication). (See Table 2.7).

1.3.1 Time Allocation, Continuity and Gender

The majority of primary children in Italian language programs study it for one hour per week or less. This is true particularly, but not exclusively, of insertion classes (cf. DEET 1990a:9). Time allocation is usually higher, depending on the specific target group in system-funded programs, and it may be distributed over two or more slots during the week.

In universities female students of Italian outnumber males four to one (cf. Comin 1987:165), and in secondary schools by about three to one (DEET 1990a), whereas in the primary schools both gender balance and continuity through grades is basically ensured by the whole-class mode of operation. Once a school makes the decision to have an Italian program, particularly an insertion program, it will run on a whole-class basis. Often, and especially in the larger States, the school will run the program from Kindergarten or Preparatory to Grade 6 or 7 for all of the pupils. This can be seen, for instance, with reference to Victorian Catholic schools (Table 1.5), where there is a high degree of continuity. From Preparatory to Year 6, Italian is consistently taught to over half of the primary school children in each of the grades.

	Prep	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Total
Number	8,399	8,459	8,556	8,381	8,262	7,944	7,903	57,904
Percent in grade/year	57.1%	56.9%	58.2%	57.6%	57.3%	55.4%	55.3%	56.8%

Table 1.5
Number and proportion of students in Victorian Catholic primary schools studying Italian in 1990
Source: Catholic Schools Victoria

1.3.2 Language Background of Learners

At the start of the 1980s the *National Survey of Language Learning in Australian Schools, 1983* observed that '... students from a non-English-speaking background (in terms of their birthplace or their parents' birthplaces) are more likely than other students to study a LOTE at school. With the exception of the lower years of secondary school (where most language study occurs), the proportions of students from a non-English-speaking background studying a LOTE are generally double the proportions of students from an English-speaking background' (DEET 1986:19). Today it is difficult to ascertain what proportion of children studying Italian in the primary school may be of Italian background or of other community language background (CLB). It is clear, however, that the overwhelming majority must now reflect the school as a whole since most of the Italian programs, whether insertion or otherwise, use a whole-class approach rather than withdrawal or formation of special groups. Italian background children are certainly a minority in most cases. For instance the largest providers of insertion classes, COASIT in Melbourne and in Sydney, state that between 2% and 20% of children in their programs are of Italian-speaking background. Similarly, the NSW Community Language Program in Government primary schools recorded 14.2% native speakers in the twenty schools with Italian in 1991.

A particular subgroup of learners, which is not easily quantifiable, should be highlighted, i.e. those who already have English as a second language and who are learning Italian as a third language. These children may or may not receive instruction in their own community language in the primary school or in their own ethnic school. The whole-class organisational model overwhelmingly adopted in the case of Italian may not serve well the language needs of these children. This problem requires sensitive consideration at the local school level.

1.3.3 Community-based Initiatives in Italian Language Teaching

Much of the teaching of Italian within mainstream primary schools as well as all the after-hours teaching to school-age children is due to the initiative of community-based associations and committees. This topic is presented at this point mostly from a quantitative point of view. After-hours classes and other education related activities of these committees will also be touched on as they are intertwined with insertion classes in respect of funding and management.

1.3.4 Insertion Classes

Any discussion about Italian in the Australian primary school today needs to refer to insertion classes, a method of expanding the teaching of Italian within the day-school pioneered by COASIT in Melbourne in 1981 and gradually adopted by other (mainly) Italian community-based school committees. Insertion classes, which are timetabled within the school day with an allocation of about one hour a week per class, are the most common type of second language programs in the Australian primary school. As already noted they are not resourced from within the school systems but through community-based committees which draw

on two main sources. One is the Italian Government's contribution which will be discussed below. The other is the Commonwealth Ethnic Schools Program (ESP), established in 1981 in recognition of 'the needs of Australia's multicultural society' (DEET 1990b:41). Its objectives are:

- to maintain the relevant languages and cultures among students of non-English-speaking background; and
- to increase awareness and understanding of all students of the different community languages and cultures within Australian society.

About 600 organisations receive funding, covering nearly 200,000 students in more than 50 languages. Most of these organisations use these funds in keeping with the first objective of the ESP which 'was conceived as a program of language maintenance for children of non-English-speaking background' (ibid.). The second objective is mainly carried by the Italian organisations which receive over two thirds of the funds and use them mainly, but not exclusively, on the insertion element. Thus 55% of ESP's beneficiaries are in fact English-speaking background students mostly learning Italian in day schools.

State	Number of Students	Amounts($)
NSW	35,510	1,172,877
Queensland	15,318	478,842
South Australia	3,712	140,567
Tasmania	110	3,600
Victoria	72,139	2,603,443
Western Australia	7,125	208,006
Australia Capital Territory	1,770	64,680
Northern Territory	51	1,964
Total (Italian)	135,795	4,673,979
Total (all 52 funded languages)	189,546	6,729,979

Table 1.6
Students in Italian courses funded under the Commonwealth Ethnic Schools Program, and amounts allocated to Italian community-based school committees in 1991
Source: DEET communication, 1992

The distribution of funds (Table 1.6) follows roughly the distribution of Italian speakers and the general population pattern. The figures of students and funding for South Australia and Western Australia do not however reflect the actual level of activity, which is greater than may appear from the table. The other major point that emerges is the level of activity in Italian as compared with other languages, whereby Italian accounts for around 70% of students and funds within the ESP.

Until the White Paper (DEET: 1991) community organisations outside the formal education systems were responsible for conducting these insertion classes, selection and employment of the teacher, decisions about the curriculum and the materials used in the classroom. In-service courses were often jointly conducted by the school systems and the community organisations. These insertion classes are focused mainly on the primary school. Only one committee among those who co-operated in research for this report referred to insertion classes operating at pre-school level, i.e. the Italo-Australian Welfare Centre (*Centro di Assistenza e di Cultura Italo-Australiana*) in Perth which organises a few pre-school classes.

The majority of insertion programs are run in the large urban centres, particularly Melbourne and Sydney, but there are some in every State. In fact COASIT runs practically all of the Italian insertion programs in those two cities. Thus in 1991

the Melbourne COASIT together with the Italo-Australian Foundation, with which it has since amalgamated, funded insertion classes in 246 Victorian primary schools (*Annual Report*, COASIT-Melbourne 1991:38). These were mostly in Catholic schools, with just over one quarter of the classes being in Government schools and a handful in Independent schools. The number of pupils, over 53,000, was slightly below the previous year. COASIT-Sydney funded 124 Government, Catholic, and a few Independent schools, totalling over 34,000 children. There is also a COASIT-Brisbane which runs insertion programs with a teaching time of thirty minutes to an hour per week in 44 non-government schools with over 9,000 pupils (Marletta 1991:12), and a further 4,000-plus pupils in 30 Government schools amounting to just over 40% of the insertion students in Queensland's Government schools.

The three COASITs just mentioned account for over three quarters of the Italian insertion classes and perhaps for this reason they are often the only organisation associated with insertion classes and other Italian teaching activities. This tends to overshadow the work of other committees which is just as valuable and necessary in other areas and States. Thus in Queensland there are a number of community-based committees such as the Sunshine Coast Italian School Committee at Bundilla and the Italian Community Centre of Far North Queensland. The former runs one hour per week Italian teaching programs in 13 schools for between 4,000 and 5,000 pupils, representing almost 40% of insertion students in Government schools. This program operates exclusively within school clusters so as to ensure that students can continue to study Italian in the local high school. The remaining 20% of Queensland insertion programs are equally shared between the above-mentioned Italian Community Centre of Far North Queensland and a number of other committees (Marletta ibid. lists ten) which often run courses only in one local school, e.g. the Macknade Italian Parents Association. Other local groups or associations are not explicitly listed, but are said to 'run insertion classes in some State schools, raising funds directly' in remote North Queensland areas (ibid.: 44).

A roughly similar situation of a plurality of committees conducting Italian teaching activities is the pattern also in South Australia and Tasmania while in the other States and Territories the insertion programs are managed by only one (non-COASIT) committee such as in Western Australia, the ACT and the Northern Territory. Nevertheless there are usually, as in every other State, a number of local committees also devoting time, energy and resources to the maintenance, promotion and use of Italian among children and adults.

The time spent by school children in the Italian language classroom at primary level does not appear to be more than an hour. Lessons range from thirty minutes a week to thirty minutes twice a week but there are instances of up to forty-five minutes three times a week. In an English-speaking environment where for most pupils Italian is being learnt as a second or a foreign language, what can be achieved in one hour of the school week has to be realistically assessed. In these circumstances it is not realistic to talk of language maintenance or a complex process of second language acquisition.

Despite their limitations, insertion classes have the merit of having established the teaching of LOTEs into many primary schools involving children in numbers well beyond those that could be involved in the school-based experiments or the State programs. Hence while giving these children their first experience of

learning a LOTE, insertion classes have contributed to giving Italian the status of the most studied language. They also give Italian-background children the pride and satisfaction of seeing their language recognised and studied at school (Bettoni and Di Biase 1991:53). In some instances insertion classes have prepared the ground for a more substantial program taken on by the mainstream school. They certainly represent a basis of experience in language teaching and learning on which the mainstream school can build.

1.3.5 After-hours Italian Language Classes, and Language Maintenance

The information presented here giving the background to these community-based committees is derived primarily from the responses of the committees to the Questionnaire (see Appendices E and F).

The first classes in the sample were begun in 1968 by COASIT. Founded simultaneously in Melbourne and Sydney, the initial impetus for the formation of these Committees for the Welfare of Italians (*Comitato di Assistenza agli Italiani*) came from the official visit of Italian president Giuseppe Saragat in 1967. This event encouraged influential community members in major urban communities to follow similar, and successful, examples of COASIT established among other Italian communities in European countries and Canada (Di Stefano 1990:64-65). These have flourished in Australia as well and have become large umbrella organisations in their own right with structures and activities not only in the educational area but also in a wide range of social welfare, cultural and community centred activities.

The Dante Alighieri society in Melbourne and the *Centro di Lingua e di Cultura* in Perth also give 1968 as their starting point. The *Comitato Italiano Assistenza*, Canberra (CIAC) began in the ACT in 1969. In 1971-72 COASIT in Brisbane, the Dante Alighieri Society in the ACT, the *Comitato Italiano di Assistenza Scolastica* (CIAS) in Darwin, and the *Federazione Italiana Lavoratori Emigrate e Famiglie* (FILEF) in Melbourne and Sydney began, followed by the Italo-Australian Welfare Centre in Western Australia in 1974. In the late 1970s, COASIT in Melbourne and FILEF in Adelaide opened their doors.

In the 1980s with the beginning of the Ethnic Schools Program, existing organisations took on insertion classes. By the late 1980s new organisations had been formed such as the Italian Culture and Welfare Association (ICWA) in Hobart, the Italian School Committee on the Sunshine Coast, and smaller language teaching groups such as those in Port Pirie and Mt Gambier.

Practically all the committees mentioned above, including COASIT, run among other activities their own after-hours courses for Italian-speaking background children, some of them in addition to insertion classes, as has been mentioned. Some of these committees do not run insertion classes but only their own (usually small and local) after-hours classes mainly for Italian-background children. Some of these also conduct classes for adults.

1.3.6 Italian in Darwin[1]

Italian has been taught in Darwin since the early 1970s. Classes began as Saturday Morning classes and were later introduced as insertion classes in the Government and Catholic schools. The programs have been financially assisted by the Italian Government. The CIAS Committee has taken on the responsibility of promoting the teaching of Italian in all the schools, again with the financial assistance of the Italian Government. The association will soon be assigned a *Direttrice Didattica* from Italy and she will be based in Darwin.

Unfortunately lack of qualified teachers and funding has sometimes stopped the programs from continuing successfully from year to year. Most of the teachers who have and are teaching in both the primary and secondary schools are qualified and often of Italian background. Teachers moving away from the Territory or going into the public teaching system often cause the programs in the schools (especially primary) to be discontinued for quite a long period of time. At the moment there are seven teachers employed in teaching Italian in both the Government and Catholic schools.

The Italian community in Darwin is not very big (approximately 4,000 people) and therefore the number of students with an Italian background in the classroom is very low, i.e. often there may only be one or two. The remaining students come from various backgrounds and nationalities

In the Northern Territory it has been very hard to maintain Italian programs in the schools, especially the Government schools, because Indonesian is supported and financially backed by the Northern Territory Government. Most of the State and Catholic schools that have introduced Italian were able to do so because they have had financial assistance from the Italian Government.

There have been and still are programs in both the primary and secondary schools. In the primary schools programs start at Transition and go through to Grade 7. In the secondary schools there are courses in Grades 8, 9, 10 and 11. In the past years there have also been courses in Year 12. The senior numbers have decreased and the majority of the students were of Italian background. In the past two years there have only been one or two students studying Italian in Year 12.

Italian adult classes are offered every year by CIAS and the numbers vary from year to year. There was an increase in numbers in 1992. There are courses for beginners, intermediate and advanced students each semester. These classes are held in the evenings at the Italian school located on the Italian Club grounds. Commencing in semester 2, 1992, the Northern Territory University is offering a course on Italian literature as a pilot project for the University.

In Darwin there is an Italian Club which organises social evenings for the Italian community. The Club along with the organisation of a small group of volunteers two years ago staged an Italian festival for the people of Darwin called 'Pasta at the Park'. This festival was held two years consecutively and there may be another one organised soon depending on time, funds and volunteers.

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1 Written by Diana Maddalozzo

Much of the social work for the Italian community in Darwin is done by the Canossian Sisters. The community has a radio program operated and put together by a small group of volunteers. The program goes on air on Sunday evenings at 8:00 pm, for an hour. It provides news, community announcements and music for the Italian community. The program had been running for a number of years and then it was cancelled because the gentleman involved became ill. Fortunately, the task was again taken on by a group of Italians.

1.3.7 The Italian Government's Critical Support

The Italian Government, as can be seen in Table 1.7 supports the language teaching activities, including insertion classes, of many of the Italian community schools committees, 33 in all, in every State and Territory.

	Number of Committees	Number of Students	Instruction time: hours	Amount $A (approx.)
NSW	6	35,983	772,138	430,000
Queensland	5	20,494	35,995	520,000
South Australia	10	6,803	21,378	105,000
Tasmania	2	719	3,250	42,000
Victoria	3	70,676	108,814	680,000
Western Australia	4	22,996	1,624	180,000
ACT	2	1,925	7,350	120,000
Northern Territory	1	491	4,000	60,000
Total	33	160,087	954,549	2,137,000

Table 1.7
Italian community school committees and students supported by the Italian Government (1991)
Source: Italian Embassy report

On average, after-hours classes have a time allocation of about two hours. Classes for children are organised largely by age, and classes for adults according to language ability either self-ascribed or determined by tests. Apart from insertion classes which are held during school hours, after-hours classes occur at other times of the day and evening, but the most common time slot for children's classes is Saturday mornings. Classes are held in Government and Catholic schools, other non-systemic schools, clubs, church halls, a university and through a correspondence school.

In after-hours classes, the fact that there are often different languages levels and ages in the same classroom makes meeting the needs of the Italian language learners a challenge for the teacher, especially as they may only meet those learners for some two hours per school week. For all Italian language learners, the major challenge is the fact that outside the classroom they are immersed in an English-speaking environment, in a society which does not regard bilingualism or indeed multilingualism as the norm.

The community-based committees fund their classes from a range of sources: the Australian Federal and State Governments, fees and levies and the contributions of the Italian Government. In some cases the Italian Government makes the largest contribution (Table 1.7).

After-hours classes for children are directed, by and large, at children of Italian background. The typical after-hours class is therefore fairly homogeneous in

terms of language background and competence, but perhaps less so in age since groups often have to be formed over a range of ages. The classes often use materials from Italy and have the language itself as the object of study rather than other subject matter. Classes are conducted mainly in Italian and their main purpose, as is the wish of the parents, is for the children to maintain or learn standard Italian. Dialects are usually shunned in these classes. Children are not often inclined to attend these classes, perhaps because they are outside school hours, but also for more complex reasons ranging from insufficient motivation to problems with the methodology employed and the perceived relevance of content. Their importance is still crucial, because despite all the history behind what Horvath calls 'the language rights movement' in Australia, the truth is that the system schools have not provided for language maintenance to the extent needed and probably will never be able to do so.

It is not possible from available data to calculate exactly how many children there are nation-wide in these after-hours classes, by comparison with those in insertion classes. The figures appearing in both the ESP and the Italian Government tables cover both sets. The after-hours classes, which are definitely a minority account for 2.5% of the total number of pupils studying Italian in Sydney.

	After-hours (Saturday)	Insertion	Total
Schools	19	124	143
Classes	57	1,160*	1,217
Teachers	49	78	84**
Students	842	34,796	35,638

Table 1.8
After-hours and insertion classes in Italian run by COASIT Sydney 1991
** Number of insertion classes is calculated on an average of 30 children per class*
*** This figure is lower than the sum of the number of teachers taking after-hours and insertion classes, because there is an almost complete overlap of teachers*
Source: COASIT Sydney, Annual Report (1991:24-25)

The after-hours classes represent only 2.5% of children studying Italian in NSW. The likelihood is that similar tiny percentages apply to all large community-based Italian programs. Of the children learning Italian, this tiny minority represents the only sustained effort in the direction of language maintenance *per se*. The insertion classes can only be language experience or second language programs. Because the language maintenance classes involve such a tiny minority, there is a risk that they will be considered less important. These classes, however, deserve the continuing close attention of both the governments and the agencies involved. This is why it is important to attempt to identify how much teaching is being directed to language maintenance.

1.3.8 Interpreting the Discrepancies

To find out how many students take part in after-hours and insertion classes it proved necessary to consult figures provided by the bodies that fund these classes. The reader may have noticed a discrepancy of approximately 24,000 between the number of students funded by the Ethnic Schools Program (135,795), and those funded by the Italian Government (160,087). In South Australia for example 3,712 students are funded by the ESP, and 6,803 by the Italian

Government. In Tasmania the figures are 110 (ESP-funded students) and 719 (Italian Government funded students). In Western Australia, the ESP funds just over 7,000 students, while three times that number are the beneficiaries of Italian Government support. The reason for this may be that when the ceiling was imposed on the growth of the ESP in 1986, demand for Italian classes in some States had not been sufficiently satisfied. The community committees had therefore to rely on the Italian Government for support.

Another reason for the discrepancies in numbers is that many of the 33 committees, as has been said, may run courses for adults whether of Italian-speaking background or not, as well as for children, and may not conduct any insertion classes, as for instance the FILEF School Committees (see Glossary) in Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney. Actually these committees tend not to favour insertion classes. Yet other organisations such as the Dante Alighieri Society conduct Italian language and culture programs at various levels exclusively for adults regardless of their background. These activities would not qualify for ESP support and may have to rely on fees or their own funds. They would, however, be eligible to receive Italian Government assistance. In that case their students will be accounted for in the Italian Embassy and Consular records. Finally there are other community committees which organise language and cultural activities out of their own funds, as has been seen, without any help from authorities. These only appear in the private records of the committees.

To recapitulate, among the range of language education activities of Italian community-based school committees which are accounted for in Tables 1.6 and 1.7 there are:

- a majority of insertion classes receiving both ESP and Italian Government funds;
- some insertion classes receiving only Italian Government funds, but no ESP funds;
- after-hours classes that receive both ESP and Italian Government funds;
- after-hours classes that receive only Italian Government funds;
- some after-hours adult classes that receive only Italian Government funds.

For these reasons there is no simple answer to the question of how many students may be involved in Italian after-hours maintenance classes, but the number Australia-wide is estimated to be about 10,000. This appears to bear out the prediction that 'as languages make their way into the schools, the need to have Saturday courses ought to taper out so that either there is no longer any need for them or, at best, they become useful only in the more isolated situations where languages are not yet taught in the local school' (Di Biase 1983:4). The mainstream school, however, for reasons ranging from scarcity of resources to the philosophy of language teaching adopted, appears to be incapable of pursuing the language maintenance objective with the same determination as the multicultural and broadly educational one. The community committees will need to revise their own philosophy, re-define rationale and objectives and find the appropriate strategies for their language teaching initiatives before the actual use of Italian falls out of sight, or out of earshot, of the community at large.

Italian language classes are not babysitting or mere fun times. There is a need to establish minimum skills and proficiencies if classes are to be taken seriously by the students and the school as a whole. Some planning has to go into assessment,

evaluation, examination and testing whether these are done formally or informally.

Some general LOTE projects, funded by the Australian Advisory Council on Languages and Multicultural Education (AACLAME), have begun to look at structuring the language curriculum and the related assessment procedures, for example the Australian Language Levels project (ALL) and National Assessment Framework for Languages at Senior Secondary Level (NAFLaSSL). AACLAME has commissioned several projects using a range of language teaching methodologies, some with specific applications to Italian, including the teaching of Italian by distance education, for example, the Distance Education and Languages (DEAL) Network, including the Distance Education Resource Package for Italian (Queensland Department of Education).

1.3.9 Unfunded Italian Language Classes

There also are many locally-based self-supporting committees which often conduct classes of Italian. They sometimes run on an individual teacher's efforts, in numerous local situations and even in isolated places with or without ESP assistance. It is clear that many Italian classes especially in isolated areas were started by teachers and native speakers taking classes without payment. The vital role of these dedicated volunteers and the family should be acknowledged and supported by official funding sources. The importance of volunteers was mentioned specifically in Coffs Harbour, NSW, Kalgoorlie, WA, and Hobart, Tasmania.

1.4 Secondary Schools

With over 73,000 students, Italian is well represented in the Australian secondary school in every State and Territory albeit not uniformly. There is an obvious disproportion, however, between secondary and primary levels. In primary school the total of students of Italian is two and a half times that at the secondary level.

The continuity of students of Italian from primary into secondary school is greatest in Victoria, with NSW and Queensland reporting the largest losses. While the Catholic school system maintains almost exactly its 52% of students studying Italian at secondary level, the Government system has a smaller proportion, while the Independent schools, where Italian is stronger in the secondary system, increase considerably their share.

Italian is a main second language in the Catholic secondary school system with more students in every State than the other systems. Western Australia appears, from Table 1.9, to be an exception, with more students studying Italian in Independent schools, but that figure includes an unknown number of primary students. The choice of Italian in the Catholic system is partly a response to religious and broad cultural and educational needs once filled to some extent by Latin. The choice is also a positive and caring response to the strong presence of

children of Italian speaking background in the Catholic education system since the 1950s. Even today, despite the lack of a significant flow of immigrants from Italy during the past decade, this Italian presence continues to be very strong as the second generation proceeds through school. In 1989, more than 5,000 students, representing a quarter of all community language background children in Victorian Catholic secondary schools, were from Italian speaking backgrounds (Ryan and Petralia, 1990:4). In NSW Catholic schools the ISB students number about 10%, just below the Arabic speaking background students.

	Number of students of Italian in secondary schools in each State									
Schools	NSW	QLD	SA	Tas	Vic	WA	ACT	NT	Total	%
Government	3,855	1,504	1,722	194	17,976	2,813	97	139	28,300	38.6%
Catholic	4,214	911	4,697	592	24,045	3,149	773	257	38,638	52.7%
Independent	1,997	--	--	--	439	3,960	--	--	6,396	8.7%
Total	10,066	2,415	6,419	786	42,460	9,922	870	396	73,334	
%	13.7%	3.3%	8.7%	1.1%	57.9%	13.5%	1.2%	0.5%	100%	

Table 1.9
Students of Italian in Secondary Schools, Australia, 1991
1. Victoria: Catholic schools figure is for 1990
2. Western Australia: Independent secondary schools figure includes some primary students as they could not be separated in the data received from AISWA

1.4.1 Correspondence, Distance Education and Saturday School of Languages

Secondary Italian courses can be taken by correspondence or distance mode but only some States have a correspondence school, and the choice of languages outside Victoria and NSW is very limited. Where the service exists it attracts a fairly constant number of people through the years who seem impervious to policy vagaries. Despite the obvious limitations of not having a teacher face to face, and the added difficulties in using this mode, there seems to be some added incentive or sheer determination on the part of the (mainly) country students who, once they have chosen Italian, keep it up to the end and do well at the final examination.

The Saturday School of Languages in Victoria and the NSW Saturday School of Community Languages offer languages, mainly in urban centres, to secondary students whose own high school may not offer the language of their choice. (This is something the school system successfully learned from the ethnic schools.) In NSW the Saturday School of Community Languages was conceived originally as a way to provide for those small candidature community languages which could not attract a large enough number of students in any one school. It could also serve, temporarily or locally, languages of larger candidature such as Arabic, Chinese, Greek, Italian, Spanish, Vietnamese and so on, which generated a strong demand that could not be met in the system. There are in fact relatively few secondary schools which offer more than one language, particularly at the senior level. Particularly in NSW, but also in other States, French is the language most commonly offered throughout the Government and Independent systems in secondary schools, either by itself or in combination with German or Italian, and more rarely with other languages.

The needs of CLB students have generated a sufficiently stable flow of candidates to make the service viable and have thus contributed to making

available to any student, whether CLB or not, an unprecedented range of languages that could be studied within the secondary school. Saturday school students in Italian are relatively few compared with Arabic or Turkish for instance, because demand for Italian is absorbed to a greater extent in the ordinary day school. Interestingly, the attrition rate in languages of both correspondence and Saturday schools is lower than that in the ordinary secondary school.

The services for the teaching of Italian by correspondence or distance education, including assessment procedures, which already exist in Victoria and NSW could be made available to States which do not have that facility, and which could in turn recognise the subject officially as their own.

1.4.2 Progression and Persistence Within the Secondary Level

The pattern of distribution of Italian across years in the secondary school characterises it as predominantly a junior secondary subject, although it is among the first five languages taught in Year 12 in almost every State.

In the junior secondary it is still common to find the so-called 'smorgasbord' or 'taster' courses in languages, namely the offer of two (one per semester) or even three (one per term) languages to junior secondary students as 'language experience' courses which are presumed to allow the student to make a more considered choice in later years. Because so little time is available to any one language in these courses, they tend to be a rather fruitless use of the school's language resources. One hopes such courses will disappear as languages become more central or compulsory within the curriculum. The taster courses inflate the numbers in language courses, giving a false impression of the numbers engaged in serious language study. If students in taster courses were not counted, for instance, the figure given in Table 1.9 for students of Italian in the NSW Independent schools system would drop by about 50%.

Secondary level*	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 12 as % of Total	Year 12 as % of Year 8
Queensland: Government schools only	1,061	131	217	47	48	3.2%	4.5%
South Australia: Government schools	758	452	272	140	100	5.8%	13.2%
South Australia: Catholic schools	1,970	1,377	763	336	251	5.3%	12.7%

Table 1.10
Students of Italian in each year of secondary school in selected States in 1991
** Secondary school in Queensland & South Australia, as in Western Australia, begins at Year 8*
Sources: Queensland: Department of Education. South Australia: K. Bernardi and A. Pavone

The pattern of distribution is illustrated in Table 1.10 which shows examples from two States of how the relatively healthy figures at the beginning of secondary school taper out rapidly by the end of it. This may be only partially explained by the fact that Italian is often not offered in senior high schools, for instance in Queensland, where the persistence rate is lower than elsewhere.

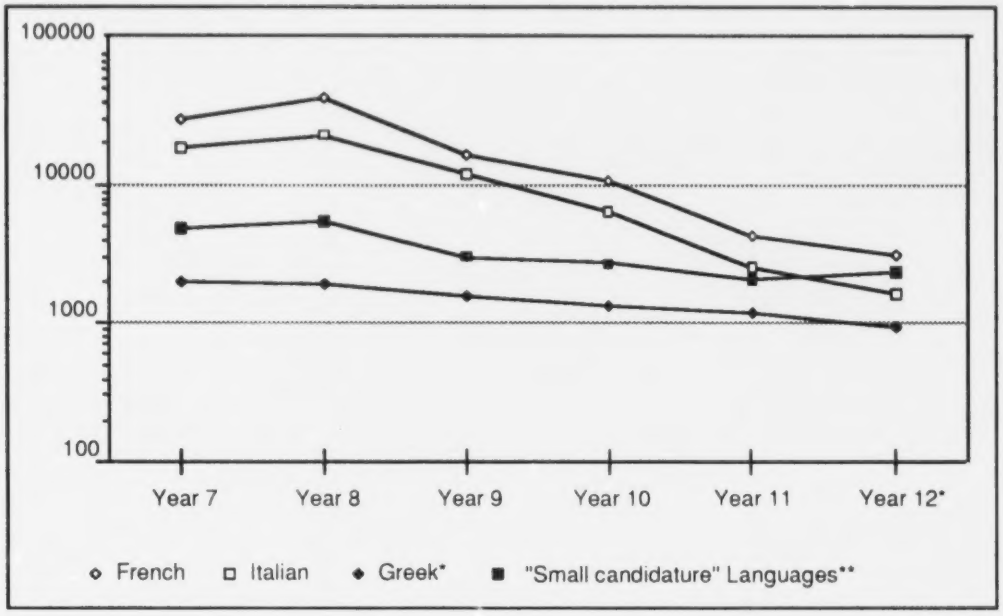

Figure 1.3
Progression pattern from Year 7 to Year 12 of Italian and other language students in Australia, 1988
From data in DEET 1990 National Survey of Language Learning in Australia 1988.
**Year 12 DEET figures do not seem to account for VCE or HSC language students in the Victorian or NSW Saturday School of Languages, e.g. in 1,988 Greek had 1093 VCE Candidates in Victoria alone while DEET gives 928 nationally*
*** These languages with fewer than 9,000 students in Australian secondary schools, e.g. Turkish*

Low retention is not, of course, unique to Italian. As can be observed in Figure 1.3, Italian in its pattern of progression in the secondary school behaves more like a 'traditional' modern/second language such as French, than a community language such as Modern Greek. The latter shows a remarkable persistence rate between Year 7 (1,971 students nationally) and Year 12 (928 students). Similarly, the small candidature languages, which are in most cases community languages, often have even higher persistence rates. For the purpose of the present discussion 'small candidature' languages are those with an overall national student population of less than 9,000.

In Italian the lack of persistence is rather critical: there were over 18,000 students in Year 7, but in Year 12 only 1,646 students, just under 9% of the Year 7 numbers. The corresponding proportion for Modern Greek was 47%, and for small candidature languages was over 48%. German at 15% and French at 10% were better positioned than Italian on this particular score. It is true that there could be a high margin of error in the figures, e.g. the NSW Saturday School of Community Languages and especially its Victorian counterpart prepare much of the Year 12 candidature, but it is not clear whether or not they were taken into account in the DEET survey.

The *Report of the Ministerial Working Party on the State Language Policy* (NSW Ministry of Education and Youth Affairs 1988:45) gives a total of 534

students of Italian in Year 12 in Government schools in NSW, and 965 for Greek, as against totals of 390 and 753 respectively reported in DEET's 1988 survey. These figures indicate a marginal improvement in the position of Italian (French and German, for instance, are not offered in the Saturday school), but even so the poor retention rate in Italian should cause concern. In particular there is the marked break in continuity between Years 10 and 11, where student numbers in Italian practically disappear as shown in Table 1.11.

	Secondary level						
	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Total
Number of students of Italian	8,021	7,501	4,719	2,496	740	568	24,045
Difference in numbers from preceding year	-	-520	-2,782	-2,223	-1756	-172	
% of students continuing from preceding year		93.5%	62.9%	52.9%	29.6%	76.8%	
Italian as a proportion language students at that year level	58.5%	55.3%	35.2%	18.4%	5.9%	5.7%	31.3%

Table 1.11
Students of Italian in Catholic Secondary Schools in Victoria in 1990
Source: Catholic Schools Victoria, Teaching of LOTE 1990

Table 1.11 does not of course represent a proper cohort of students followed from Year 7 to Year 12 over a six year period. Nevertheless it can be imagined that these patterns do not change radically over the short term. The measurement, however rough, does reflect a broad tendency. Retention of Italian as a school subject becomes progressively reduced as students move between Years 7 and 10. Between Year 10 and Year 11, more than two thirds of the students abandon the subject, but of those who choose Italian in Year 11, a good three quarters persist till Year 12.

Part of the explanation for this behaviour could be that Italian in the secondary school is treated purely as a modern or foreign language. In this respect the progression pattern has not changed significantly since the mid 1970s. There is only one syllabus in any State for Italian as for French, compared with Indonesian and Japanese in NSW, for instance, where there are two distinct syllabuses: one for native and one for non-native speakers. Italian, then, competes with stronger and longer established languages such as French, without reaping the benefits (at Year 12) of a strong community language such as Greek or Chinese.

The other major (structural) explanation is the limited availability of Italian at senior secondary levels. Perhaps paradoxically, at the next level up, first year university, rather than suffering a further drop, as has been occurring right through the secondary school, Italian does relatively well. Although a number of Year 12 students do not continue with Italian at university, there are numbers of students who take it up at that level for the first time. The dynamics operating in each of the three educational levels, primary, secondary and university, may be different and to some extent independent of each other.

The above figures showing the distribution by State of Year 12 students of Italian are problematic because each State education system seems to have its own method of concluding the secondary school cycle. There may be formal external assessment, which may take a number of forms and be more or less centralised, or

without formal assessment but with a tertiary entry test which may not test at all a specific subject such as Italian.

	Year 12 candidates enrolled in Italian			
	1991	% of total candidates in Italian 1991	1992	% of total candidates in Italian 1992
NSW	757	29.4%	723	29.6%
Queensland	180	7.0%	102	4.2%
SA/NT	335	13.0%	291	11.9%
Tasmania	77	3.0%	137	5.6%
Victoria	752	29.2%	691	31.1%
WA	396	15.4%	373	15.3%
ACT	77	3.0%	59	2.4%
Total	2,574	100%	2,444	100%

Table 1.12
Year 12 candidates enrolled in Italian in 1991 and 1992

Hence the figures in Table 1.12 will have to be taken to mean subtly different aggregates according to the State to which they refer, but broadly speaking they indicate the number of students who have taken Italian to the final year of the secondary school or have sat for the relevant examination in 1991 and 1992.

The Year 12 figures given for Victoria are interesting in connection with the issue of retention just discussed. Given the strength of Italian in Victorian secondary schools relative to that in other States, one would have expected Victoria to have higher numbers in Year 12. It seems that although most of the other States lack the numbers taking Italian in the other years of the secondary school, they catch up somewhat by the end.

A further point to be noticed is that a downward trend seems to have established itself in the last three years and seems to be uniformly affecting all States with the exception of Tasmania, which is the only State which has actually registered an increase since last year.

1.5 Universities

In 1992 Italian was taught in 25 out of 36 universities, with a fairly even distribution across Australia. In Victoria the laborious process of university amalgamation has resulted in Italian being present in all its universities, as it is in South Australia. NSW, with six out of nine universities teaching Italian, appears to have the highest number of enrolments, while in the other two mainland States, Western Australia and Queensland, Italian is taught in three universities. Tasmania and the ACT each have one institution teaching Italian. The Northern Territory University introduced in the second semester in 1992 some courses in Italian.

	University
Interstate	Australian Catholic University (Italian in its NSW and Victoria campuses)
ACT	The Australian National University
NSW	The University of Sydney The University of New England The University of Wollongong The University of Western Sydney Macquarie University
Northern Territory	Northern Territory University
Queensland	Griffith University James Cook University of North Queensland Queensland University of Technology
South Australia	The Flinders University of South Australia University of South Australia The University of Adelaide
Tasmania	The University of Tasmania
Victoria	La Trobe University The University of Melbourne Monash University Deakin University Swinburne University of Technology Victoria University of Technology Royal Melbourne University of Technology
Western Australia	The University of Western Australia Murdoch University Edith Cowan University

Table 1.13
Australian universities teaching Italian in 1992

1.5.1 Position of Italian in the University Structure

At the beginning of the 1990s, despite the changes caused by the study of Japanese taking the lead from the traditional front-runner, French, Italian retains its place as the second most widely available language nationally with a presence in 26 tertiary institutions. The decrease in the number of institutions, compared with the mid 1980s is due mostly to the amalgamation process. In enrolments Italian was third, behind Japanese and French.

It is difficult to find out exact student numbers. According to the allocation of Equivalent Full Time Student Units (EFTSU) in 1990 Italian was standing at 885 EFTSUs, with more than two thirds concentrated in NSW (310) and Victoria (292) (based on Leal et al. 1991). The relationship between EFTSU and actual number of students is rather complex and varies, sometimes dramatically, between one institution and another. For instance in 1991 there were five students enrolled per EFTSU in Italian at Flinders University, but eleven students per EFTSU at the University of South Australia while the average for the three universities of South Australia including the University of Adelaide was just under seven students per EFTSU, according to calculations based on figures in Rubichi (1992:7:8). Again, the three enrolments per EFTSU ratio for Italian at the University of Sydney, the oldest established Department of Italian, is comparatively more favourable. If these figures are extrapolated nationally the number of students of Italian in the early 1990s should be somewhere between 4,000 and 6,500.

Only about one in three universities, usually the older established ones, offer complete undergraduate and postgraduate sequences in Italian up to PhD (Table 1.14 from Bettoni 1992), while in six of the universities the offer of courses in Italian consists of less than the basic three year BA sequences. Only six out of the 26 institutions have a full chair of Italian: The University of Sydney has had a chair since 1963; the Flinders University of South Australia, The University of Melbourne and the University of Western Australia established chairs in the first half of the 1970s; La Trobe University instituted the Gualtiero Vaccari chair in 1982, and at the University of Wollongong a chair within Modern Languages, originally occupied by a French specialist, was assigned to the Italianist Brian Moloney (Carsaniga, 1991:170).

University	Chair of Italian	Enrolments Expressed in EFTSU		
		Total	Honours	Post-grad
The University of Sydney	Yes	146.70	4.50	10.80
La Trobe University	Yes	85.00	3.50	0.50
The Flinders University of South Australia	Yes	62.76	2.25	0.50
The University of New England		59.41	1.00	1.50
The University of Western Australia	Yes	57.48	4.58	4.50
The University of Melbourne	Yes	47.53	3.50	3.50
Monash University		43.78	--	0.00
Victoria University of Technology		41.92	--	-
# South Australian College of Advanced Education		41.00	--	-
# Catholic College of Education		39.00	--	-
# Swinburne Institute of Technology		37.15	--	-
The University of Wollongong	Yes	28.74	0.00	0.00
# Western Australian College of Advanced Education		27.13	0.00	-
Griffith University		22.05	?	?
The University of Western Sydney		20.90	--	-
The University of Tasmania		19.44	--	0.00
Macquarie University		15.70	--	-
# Phillip Institute of Technology		15.03	--	-
James Cook University of North Queensland		14.66	--	2.00
The Australian National University		13.76	--	2.00
# Institute of Catholic Education		11.16	--	-
# Victoria College		10.50	--	-
Murdoch University		10.01	--	-
Queensland University of Technology		8.49	--	-
# South Australian Institute of Technology		6.00	--	-
The University of Adelaide: See Flinders**			--	-
Total		885	19	25

Table. 1.14
Tertiary institutions enrolments in Italian in 1990
Expressed in EFTSU (Equivalent Full Time Student Units)
--- Not offered
0.00 No current enrolments
 # Institutions that have changed into, or become part of, a university
- No postgraduate studies in Italian at the time of the Leal et al. *Review*
*** Italian at the University of Adelaide is serviced by Flinders University, and the EFTSU figure for the latter university includes both*
Source: Bettoni (1992) from data in Leal et al. *(1991)*

In four universities Italian has its own department, while in the great majority of cases it is placed in departments covering a number of languages usually within the Faculty of Arts/Humanities. Only in rare cases, such as at the University of Western Sydney, Macarthur, and Queensland University of Technology, is Italian found within the Faculty of Education. However some Faculties of Education include languages 'method' which may include Italian method offered as part of professional teacher education courses. The latter most commonly

produce secondary teachers despite the unprecedented presence of Italian in the primary school.

Broadly speaking the position of Italian in Australian universities is less robust than could be inferred by its widespread presence in universities and the number of enrolments. It is in a structurally fragile fifth place in terms of average EFTSUs per institution, with a figure of 34 EFTSUs, which is well under the 78 EFTSUs on average for Japanese and the 62 for French. The White Paper (DEET 1991:71) reports a decrease in the number of students of Italian from 14.8% of all language students in 1988 to 12.1% in 1990. In the context of a general increase in university enrolments this may not mean a decrease in absolute numbers, but since the basis for the White Paper's assertion is not given, it is difficult, as we have seen, to use the EFTSU allocations to calculate what the actual number of enrolments in Italian might be.

The EFTSU allocations, however, mean that in plain language resources for Italian have to be spread more thinly than for comparable languages of wider teaching, thus placing it in a weak position, i.e. there are many part-time but few tenured and few senior staff, and consequently poor career chances for staff and, worse still, few real opportunities for sustained studies, training and postgraduate work for students.

1.6 TAFE, Non-award Courses and Other Adult Education

1.6.1 Technical and Further Education (TAFE)

The information about TAFE is based mainly on the study by Baker and White (1991) and a follow up survey by Baker (1992).

According to the first survey less than half the approximately 220 TAFE colleges in Australia offered any language courses in 1990. In that year Italian was offered at 23 TAFE colleges: ten in NSW, six in Victoria, five in South Australia, one each in Western Australia and the ACT and none in Tasmania, Queensland and the Northern Territory. Among the classes surveyed it was found that there were thirteen beginners, eight intermediate, four advanced classes, and one not defined.

The attrition rate for Italian was 23%, which was the lowest compared with other languages. By the second semester, 1990, there were 284 students (as against 369 enrolled at the start of the year) in 26 Italian classes. Many TAFE students who begin a language (over half according to the survey) do not intend to continue to study it. It is difficult to ascertain whether this is so because of the lack of continuity in the language offered at the appropriate levels within TAFE colleges. In fact some of the 36% who intended to continue expressed concern over 'the lack of opportunity to continue their LOTE studies to a higher level' (ibid.: 75).

In the Baker and White survey Italian ranked fourth by number of classes, after Japanese, French and German. Among the colleges that did not participate in the survey, there were at least four more in NSW that listed Italian among the offering in their handbook.

In relation to the choice of languages in TAFE, Baker and White comment that 'The most popular languages chosen for study by TAFE clientele are similar to those deemed most important for Australia's business and export opportunities by Stanley, Valverde and others ... These are: Japanese, French, German, Chinese, Spanish, Indonesian and Italian' (ibid.: 10). However, other reasons which are more broadly cultural or integrative in nature are also given by the 663 students who responded to the survey. The most common single reason given by students, in equal lead with employment, is travel (each at 18%) while 'other major considerations are: interest in the culture of the country, pleasure and curiosity, and for leisure activities' (ibid.: 74). Interestingly more than half have visited the country of the language they are studying and nearly 80% intend to make another, or a first, trip to the country.

In terms of career choices 79% of students responded that at the end of their studies they would choose, in order of priority, hospitality and tourism, teaching, interpreting/translating, working in travel companies and in social services.

1.6.2 Continuing Education

The level of subscription to continuing education outside formal degree structures is an excellent indicator of the real level of demand for a language or for any other skill or body of knowledge in the community. This is because the client is not constrained by the barriers that can be encountered within award courses: e.g. scarce resources, or lockstep design particularly in professional education.

Many of the old established universities conduct substantial continuing education programs for adults. Humanities, and among them languages always figure prominently in such programs. For years Italian has been one of the languages enjoying an overall increasing or steady level of demand. For example, Continuing Education at the University of Sydney regularly offers four or five courses in Italian, similar to the number offered in French.

Macquarie University's Continuing Education Italian courses present a particularly interesting case. So successful were they since their inception in the early 1980s that many undergraduate students enrolled and created enough momentum for Italian to be included in the more formal degree studies of the School of Modern Languages which had not offered Italian previously. Now it does, but resource allocation and staffing constraints do not allow it to cover the full undergraduate range. Despite this rather severe constraint, demand for Italian within the BA is steady. In the continuing education sector, demand for Italian is also solid and manifests a pattern of increase over time, unlike French and Japanese as can be seen in Table 1.15 (Andrews, D., personal communication).

	Numbers of students enrolled		
Language	1988	1990	1992
French	306	327	262
Italian	213	233	250
Japanese	265	221	229

Table 1.15
Italian and selected languages in Continuing Education, Macquarie University

1.6.3 Non-award Courses

Two of the older established universities, namely Queensland and New South Wales, do not offer Italian within their award structure. However they do offer language courses in Italian at various levels in their respective Institutes of (Modern) Languages. While these courses do not count towards a degree they demand high standards of achievement in language skills and are often oriented towards the professions. Courses may also be designed according to client needs and specific purposes.

Italian fares well in non-award courses, enjoying a steady pattern of demand over the years which does not display the sudden rise and fall of languages of high current demand such as Japanese or, to a lesser extent Spanish, nor the longer periods of decline found in languages such as French which fortunately, however, maintain an underlying core of demand (Figure 1.3).

At the University of NSW Institute of Languages, Italian, one among a dozen languages offered in non-award courses, enjoys a steady support in enrolment with 14% to 17% of all enrolments over the last seven years. Italian has increased in popularity with the increasing of total enrolments over the period and has become the second most popular language in the last three years (after Japanese which had about 30% of enrolments in 1991).

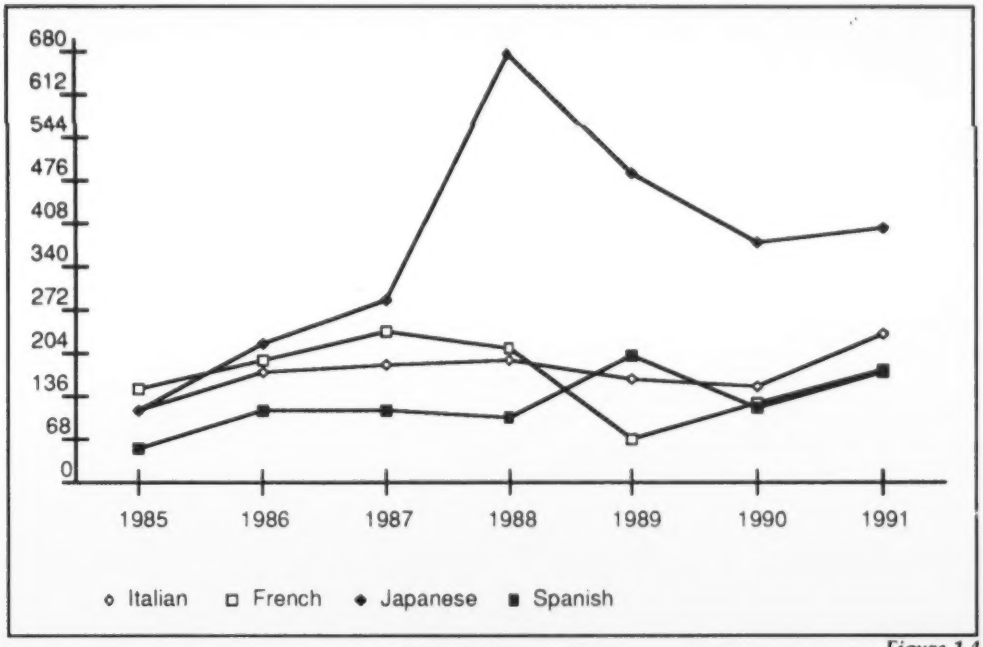

Figure 1.4
Number of Students in selected languages at the Institute of Languages, University of NSW 1985-1991
Source: Carol Waites, Institute of Languages, UNSW

1.6.4 Other Post-School Italian Courses

Italian language courses for adults other than the ones dealt with so far are conducted by the Workers Educational Association (WEA) and other bodies supported by the Board of Adult Education. Among the specifically Italian institutions and associations, language learning activities are conducted by Italian Cultural Institutes, Dante Alighieri Societies (see Glossary), and the Italian Government through its system of in-service courses and scholarships in Italy. These organisations provide very different kinds of language settings for the adult learner. At the community and individual level there are classes organised by Italian and regional clubs, commercial language schools, private tuition, TV language programs and self tuition.

Adult Italian language learners come from varied backgrounds. For example, in the CIS language school in Melbourne, 5% of language learners are from an Italian background; 70-80% are Australian-born of English speaking background, and 15% from other backgrounds.

The rural areas provide a varied picture. For example in the Italo-Australian club in the rural area of Mt Gambier the ratio is 50%-50%. At Port Pirie 80% are of Italian background, 10% are Australian-born of English speaking background and 10% are other. These are after-hours classes and as a rule, given their

emphasis on language maintenance, there is a much higher percentage of learners of Italian speaking background than in other classes.

It is interesting that a Melbourne commercial language school such as CIS, the publisher and language school in Carlton, is able to operate and to generate the necessary income to prosper without any government subsidy. A large population base one would think is a critical consideration, but other places are considering the possibility of a commercial language school, for example Darwin. In Perth there is an ambitious initiative to establish a 50+ university specifically to meet the needs of the Italian community. Plans include studies in Italian.

Some programs and classes continue from year to year, relatively unchanged, such as those organised by Dante Alighieri, the Italian Cultural Institute, the Italian Embassy or commercial language teaching schools such as CIS in Melbourne. Other language classes appear and disappear according to demand and availability of resources.

1.7 Diplomatic and Military Language Training

The Language Training Unit of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade trained only five officers in Italian in 1991-92 and examined a further five. Training at the Unit, in Canberra, is carried out over a five or six month period and it may involve also a one month study period in Florence. The language proficiency examination conducted by the Unit consists of a three and a half hour series of tests involving oral and writing tasks including translation. The Department believes that its Italian language training needs are not great since the only postings involved are the Australian Embassy in Rome and the Vatican Embassy, the latter with only one senior officer posted. Given the current and potential commercial, cultural and tourist links between Australia and Italy, the current training in Italian within the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade may be an under-estimation of future needs.

The Royal Australian Air Force School of Languages at Point Cook offered Italian until the early 1960s. This was needed because the RAAF had bought Italian training aircraft. Italian was hence offered to technical and equipment personnel to enable them to understand technical manuals and documentation. Since languages at the RAAF School are offered strictly according to military needs, Italian has been discontinued and there is no foreseeable need at present.

2 TRENDS IN ITALIAN LANGUAGE EDUCATION

2.1 Historical Background

In 1901 fewer than 6,000 Italians were counted in the first Australian census of this century. Italian was not among the small number of classical and foreign languages required for university entrance. By the mid 1930s Italians numbered nearly 30,000, but that was not the reason why the Italian language became one of the qualifying subjects to access the BA at the University of Sydney and one of the foreign languages that could be studied at secondary school level. This happened, as Totaro (1990:112) surmises, 'because its cultural status was comparable' to French and German, which were the other qualifying foreign languages. This did not mean that Italian was introduced in schools; indeed it would have to wait till the mid 1950s for the number of school students to become visible. In the universities,the 'incubation' period went right up to the end of the 1960s. As Wykes (1966:30) perceptively commented at the time: 'It is worth noting, that in spite of the size of the Italian community in Melbourne and Sydney, there are very few native speakers taking Italian at the universities.'

Recognition was nevertheless an important event for two reasons. Firstly, it lent Italian legitimacy as far as the top educational institutions in the country were concerned, thereby laying the necessary premise for its development. Secondly this birthright, which emphasised the cultural rationale above any other, profoundly shaped its destiny and marked its methodology and content to this day in the secondary and particularly the tertiary educational levels.

2.1.1 From the 1960s to the 1980s, or from Local to National

Given the above premises and the rare presence of languages in the primary school in the 1950s and 1960s, it seems natural that hardly any mention can be found of Italian in the primary school until the significant political changes of the early 1970s. Yet between October 1945 and 1970 there were 357,750 permanent and long term arrivals in Australia of people with Italian citizenship (Bureau of Immigration Research 1991:12).

This demographic presence both in society and in schools was a powerful factor in bringing about changes in the decades to come. So while the Italian presence was increasing with the new arrivals, by the 1971 census there were already nearly 200,000 persons born in Australia of Italian-born parents, and both groups (parents and children) together nearly reached half a million at that point (or more precisely 485,291 persons counted by the census) according to the Commonwealth Department of Education (1977:4).

The change to a national Labor Government in 1972, led by Gough Whitlam, after twenty years of conservative leadership in Australia, was the catalyst for the political changes which were to shift public policy from an assimilationist position to one which espoused multiculturalism.

2.1.2 The Political Context of Multiculturalism

This coincided with the peak of Italian and also Greek immigration which in the 1971 census registered their historical maximum at approximately 289,000 and 160,000 people respectively. Other non-English speaking immigrant groups, the German, Yugoslav, and later the Latin-Americans, Lebanese and Vietnamese were to peak throughout the 1970s and early 1980s. This fact had its own political weight in government decision making, so that despite the brevity of the Whitlam era, 1972 to 1975, multiculturalism not only persisted, but developed further at both national and State levels as a bipartisan policy, stimulated and promoted by initiatives of the communities, teachers, academics, unionists and social workers.

At the national level the Liberal Party Government under Malcolm Fraser which came to power in 1975 commissioned and fully adopted an innovative and humane report (known as the Galbally Report, 1978), which established among others the Multicultural Education Program (MEP), the first to fund languages and multicultural initiatives in education. In the same period the Wran Labor Government established in NSW the first Ethnic Affairs Commission and adopted its first major report, *Participation*, which advocated 'That a stated objective of the NSW Department of Education be the provision of facilities within schools for the study of community language and culture by all children who desire such study from the earliest years of primary school' (Totaro et al. 1978:533). Implementation began in NSW in 1981, while another State, South Australia under the premiership of Don Dunstan, one of the earliest and strongest advocates of multiculturalism, was already experimenting with a range of programs in the primary schools: Italian bilingual and maintenance programs, such as the 'Ten schools' project (Rubichi 1977 and 1983, Wiseman 1985), as well as second language programs in the upper primary (Senate 1984:86).

The multicultural ethos that was built in the 1970s has become part of the image Australia likes to project both at home and in the international arena. It has given a strong rationale to many social and cultural initiatives, not only in education but in such areas as broadcasting and social welfare services, all of which undoubtedly place Australia among the nations that have managed their diversity in a most enlightened way. This orientation remained strong through the 1980s even though it gradually lost its early impetus.

2.1.3 Cross-currents in Language Education

Oddly enough the rise of multiculturalism and of community languages, while positive for language education, coincided with other historical trends which were to marginalise the position of all languages in education The first trend started at the time of the World War II when the foreign language requirement for entry to Melbourne University and the University of Sydney was abandoned, causing a dramatic decline in the study of the few languages on offer. As Wykes notes, the slide was arrested in NSW by the re-imposition of the matriculation requirement of a foreign language or mathematics in 1959. The second trend was

perhaps even more negative as it directly affected the structure of secondary schools. As Wykes (1965:12-13) comments, 'the Wyndham Reform relegated foreign languages to the position of *elective subjects*. They are the only group of subjects taught in the first half of this century which are *not represented in the core curriculum* of the secondary schools of New South Wales' (our emphases).

While the intent of such reforms was to tease languages (almost exclusively French, German and Latin) out of a presumed elitist position, the actual, perhaps unintended, consequence was to relegate languages to a marginal position in education and even more so in the mainstream culture.

This historical coincidence has meant that the decline of those languages has been confused perhaps irreparably with the growth of community languages, and the two trends have been linked in a cause-effect proposition, i.e. the decline of French, Latin and Greek (German remained fairly stable) was attributed to the fact that community languages were being promoted. Italian, and other languages which had a community base such as Modern Greek, were less affected by those changes and continued to grow, or, like German, remained stable. Indeed, it can be argued that, far from subtracting any potential market from more traditionally established languages, community languages arrested the general decline in languages by bringing fresh energies and new pools of students into the languages area as a whole, since many of students came from a migrant working class background. In any case the 1960s had already produced very strong and passionate advocacy, for example from academics such as Olive Wykes and Ron Holt, for diversification in the languages on offer for broad educational, cultural and international trade reasons.

2.1.4 Historical Developments in Schools

In their study of high school students of languages over the period 1957-1963, Wykes and King found that beside the traditional 'big three' (French, Latin and German), six other languages were taught to a relatively small number of students. As the largest of this group Italian had 1,431 secondary students in 1961 spread across Victoria, Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia and mainly in Independent (non-government) schools (Wykes and King 1968:50-64). Numbers continued to grow steadily since then at all educational levels, albeit with different peaks and troughs as well as different volumes and rhythm, right through to the end of the 1980s.

By 1964 there were 560 students studying Italian throughout Australia at matriculation level (see Glossary), (Holt 1967:19), and just over 250 students in three universities: Sydney, Melbourne and Western Australia (Wykes 1966:25). Within ten years the matriculation candidature in Italian almost doubled even though the status of languages in the secondary school had been by then seriously marginalised.

The percentage of students studying languages dropped from 37% in 1968 to 14% in 1974, as shown in Table 2.1. The decline affected mainly French and Latin, but it must have had a general effect of turning students away from languages since proportionately fewer students chose a language as a matriculation subject over

the 1968-1978 period. The gains in Italian certainly did not compensate for the losses in Latin, which had a rather different candidature in terms of social class. Neither did the gains in all the other languages, including Indonesian which at the time was being strongly supported by government policy, manage to offset the losses to the language field as a whole. The decline stopped in 1978 and the percentage of students taking language matriculation subjects stabilised at about the 1974 level. The negative effect of the reforms was probably less felt among the children of immigrants who continued to study languages in higher proportions than did the general student population.

	1968	1970	1972	1974	1976	1978	1979	1980	1981
French	15,515	12,916	10,187	8,340	7,216	5,878	5,994	5,754	5,395
German	3,290	3,482	3,166	3,032	3,110	2,949	3,202	3,094	2,997
Latin	2,794	1,702	954	535	363	305	285	269	328
Indonesian	445	960	1,147	987	1,135	1,223	1,190	1,230	1,157
Italian	687	706	816	903	1,212	1,446	1,514	1,573	1,738
All language subjects	23,470	20,565	17,191	14,719	15,047	14,487	15,176	14,935	14,995
All matriculation. subjects	63,429	77,480	84,428	89,610	104,551	104,144	101,661	97,017	97,291
Students of languages as a % of all matriculation. students	37%	27%	20%	16%	14%	14%	15%	15%	15%

Table 2.1

Students sitting/studying* selected language subjects at matriculation level 1968-1981

Sources: Working Party on Languages and Linguistics in Australian Universities (1976) for data up to 1974; and Hawley (1982) for data 1976-1981

** The Working Party reports State examining authorities, while Hawley's figures represent 'enrolments in secondary matriculation programs'. The latter's figures maybe slightly higher than those for students actually sitting the exam.*

Italian and Modern Greek by the mid 1970s shared the status of migrant languages *par excellence*, as the Departments of Education and the Australian institutions generally became much more aware of the enormous 'migrant presence', as Martin (1978) called the phenomenon, in the schools and the community at large. The needs and aspirations for recognition were not met, at this stage, except for the English as a Second Language (ESL) program which had started in the late 1960s. The concepts of integration and soon after that of multiculturalism were rapidly replacing the assimilationist culture in government circles and among the people. The Commonwealth Department of Education at that time became very interested in knowing (through an extensive survey conducted in 1975 by a Committee of Inquiry) what was the extent of that presence in the schools and what was being done in respect of *The Teaching of Migrant Languages in Australian Schools* (Commonwealth Department of Education 1976).

The Committee received many submissions, the majority from ethnic groups or individuals of migrant background. 'Almost all submissions supported the teaching of migrant languages in schools although the reasons for this support tended to vary' (op. cit.: 12). The reasons most commonly given by ethnic submissions were 'cultural heritage', 'civic', 'secure identity', 'family cohesion' and 'individuals birthright' (op. cit.: 131-132). Organisations and individuals of Italian background were among the submission writers (op. cit.: 146-153).

There were 76,304 primary-aged ISB students in Australian schools, the largest number being in Victoria (26,425), followed by NSW (21,233), while in secondary schools there were 32,153 ISB students, almost half of whom were in Victoria (Commonwealth Department of Education op. cit.: 21 and 44). The report shows the concentration of students of Italian speaking background in particular

primary and secondary schools: 141 primary schools reported between 100-199 ISB students, while fourteen reported an extraordinary range of between 200-499 such students; at secondary level 72 schools had between 100-199 ISB students and 17 reported between 200-499.

The 2,598 secondary schools which responded to the 1975 Commonwealth survey, reported that in 1969 they had more than 6,000 students studying Italian, nearly a five fold growth since Wykes and King's survey in 1961. More than half were in Victoria but there was a representation in all States. The same schools reported that in the year 1975 there were 21,528 secondary students of Italian in 184 schools. Out of the thirteen languages reported, Italian had the third largest group of language students after French and German.

The students of Italian were well-distributed across States and Territories except the Northern Territory. Unsurprisingly since there were the same responding schools, the pattern of distribution was very similar to the 1969 one, as summarised in Table 2.2, with Victoria leading with over half of the total, and with very strong representation in Western Australia, Queensland and South Australia, while NSW was lagging behind by comparison.

State	Number of students, 1969	Number of students, 1975
NSW	342	1,768
Qld	699	2,211
SA and NT	450	2,806
Tas	81	93
Vic	3,561	11,195
WA	1,028	3,405
ACT	*	50
Total	6,161	21,528

Table 2.2
Secondary Students of Italian in Australia in 1969 and 1975
** Included with NSW 1969 figure*
Source: Commonwealth Department of Education (1976)

It is worth noting that in 1975 nearly one third (6,306) of the students in 130 secondary courses of Italian were of Italian speaking background, almost half of these in Victoria, while in 41 primary school courses, there were 2,114 ISB students studying Italian, most of them in Victoria (Commonwealth Department of Education 1976).

2.1.5 Consolidation

In the period 1974-81, the years in which multiculturalism established a position in the national consciousness, the number of students sitting for the matriculation examination in Italian nearly doubled nationally, increasing from 903 to 1,738 (Table 2.1) and becoming the third most widely taught language at this level. The increase was mostly attributable to NSW (154 to 452) which now had figures comparable with those of other States, Victoria (409 to 641) and South Australia (85 to 227). Other States and Territories also registered some growth except Queensland and Tasmania where enrolments remained anchored to the 60-70 mark (Hawley 1982:86-93).

2.2 The Catholic Schools and the Teaching of Italian

A number of significant factors — common religion, the high representation of Italian children in the Catholic schools, together with the willingness of those schools to respond to the school community needs (Piccioli: in press) — all converged to make the study of Italian most strongly established in the Catholic system, which by the mid 1970s reported about two thirds of the total number of students (14,067). On the other hand, Government schools had not been altogether unresponsive, as they reported 7,233 students of Italian, while there were very few students studying Italian in the Independent schools (Commonwealth Department of Education 1976:38-41).

The link between the teaching of Italian and the Catholic school was even more pronounced in the primary schools which accounted for about 82% of the 13,692 children reported to be studying Italian at that level in 1975. There were at the time 670 courses in languages, in probably as many primary schools. One quarter of these courses (136) were in Italian, which, after French, was the most widely taught language at primary level. The marked tendency of parents of Italian background to send their children to Catholic schools was remarked upon by the report on *The Teaching of Migrant Languages in Australian Schools* (op. cit.: 18): 'Lebanese, Italian, Polish and Maltese speaking parents seemed to favour Catholic schools for their children's education more frequently than other migrant groups,' and this preference found a large measure of responsiveness and sensitivity in the Catholic system to the parents' and community's wish to have Italian maintained.

This activity was taking place in schools long before any policy moves or funded programs on the part of either the Commonwealth or State Governments, the Italian Government or the Italian community based committees, which were being formed at the time and mostly concentrated on after-hours schools or 'ethnic' schools, as they were beginning to be called. Local schools, primary and secondary, were clearly responding at least in some measure to perceived needs and aspirations of their communities.

2.2.1 Italian and The Catholic Education System[2]

The Catholic Education System has played a vital and invaluable role in the field of Education in Australia since its inception in 1822 when the first Catholic school was established in Australia (Corrigan, p. 6). It came into being as Brother M. Flynn aptly describes:

> amid the storm of ideological conflict and sectarian bitterness surrounding the issue of State aid to denominational schools in the 1880s (Flynn, p. 20).

Notwithstanding the initial difficulties faced by early Catholic educators they laid the ground for what has become one of the most important and widespread

2 This is a summary by Geoffrey Hull of an article by Maria Teresa Piccioli, Australian Catholic University, Strathfield. *The Status of Italian within the Catholic Education System*, (in press).

non-government schooling systems in Australia. The main religious orders responsible for initiating it were principally the Marist Brothers, Christian Brothers, Jesuit Fathers, Benedictine Fathers and Nuns, the De La Salle Brothers, the Sisters of Mercy, the Sisters of Charity, and of the Good Samaritan and those of St Joseph.

The languages that figured prominently in the curriculum of secondary schools at the time were Latin and classical Greek, as well as French. The Catholic Church in Australia more recently has faced up to the implications of immigration and has adopted a policy of cultural equity in regard to the great variety of ethnic groups within its fold. Thus in the early 1970s when the school population in the Catholic system had become increasingly of non-English speaking background a need to introduce languages such as Italian was seen to be a valuable asset. This trend increased in the 1980s when several systemic primary schools also introduced Italian. (Desmond Cahill (1984) has written extensively on the multicultural nature of Catholic schools.) The Australian Catholic Education System is, currently one of the strongest supporters of LOTE, its firm policy being that 'Regardless of language background, children attending Catholic Schools should have access and be encouraged to take advantage of opportunities for learning languages other than English'. It is believed, however, that the choice of languages should in no way create division or competition.

The principal objectives of the Church's current Language Action Plan are reflected in its response to the discussion paper on Australian Literacy and Language Policy (1991). In this document the Catholic Education Office (CEO) stressed its commitment to the goals of language maintenance and bilingualism, noting that 'We would argue most strongly that language planning to *preserve* and *promote* the nation's language resources should be fundamental to any national policy on languages and that it is wasteful of Australia's resources to do otherwise. What is required is public affirmation of the importance of retaining and *developing* the languages already spoken in the Australian community' (CEO 1991:3).

In regard to its bilingual approaches strategy (one which enjoys strong community support), the CEO also expressed its disagreement with 'deficit model' programs which focus on a lack of English and seem to make literacy development their only goal. 'The cognitive and linguistic advantages that accrue when children develop a sound knowledge of two languages are well documented. Such research, and the experience of increasing numbers of our schools have also shown that for children from a language background other than English, bilingual programs are a sound basis for successful English language and literacy development' (ibid.: 16).

While agreeing with the need to introduce and expand Asian and other priority languages, as proposed by the Australian Second Language Program, the CEO nonetheless emphasises its conviction that '*all* languages have personal, social and material value, and we do not promote the teaching of a language solely on the grounds of its presumed economic value' (ibid.: 21).

The Status of Italian in Catholic Systemic Primary Schools

Pupils of Italian background form the second largest language group other than English. They represent 10.47% of the total enrolments of the Archdiocese, the first being Arabic (11%). Italian programs funded by the CEO tend to target

mother-tongue Italian speakers. Apart from these there are the insertion classes which COASIT currently provides to the Catholic systemic primary schools under the Ethnic Schools Program. In 1990 of a total number of 9,650 students engaged in these insertion classes, the vast majority (8,389 or 87%) were of non-Italian background, with only 1,261 (13%) coming from Italian-speaking families. (Some 688 pupils in Catholic non-systemic or Independent schools also attended the COASIT courses.)

That year the financial crisis experienced by COASIT caused the CEO to undertake a review of the insertion classes in the light of its concern for bilingualism and language maintenance. While grateful for the assistance of COASIT, and acknowledging that many schools were very satisfied with the program, the review concluded that 'Language proficiency has been neither a major goal nor outcome of insertion classes for either first or second learners of Italian in the Archdiocese of Sydney. ... Furthermore, we are moving towards a position of having a preference for quality second language programs which have language proficiency as a goal. This may well mean fewer language programs, in the short term. ... In other words, the Catholic System would want to do more than give students an opportunity to experience second language learning'.

The CEO offers two other language programs in Primary Schools, in neither of which Italian is at present well represented. The Bilingual Maintenance Program uses two target languages as its medium of instruction. It is intended for children whose first language is not English, and aims at developing full bilingualism. Bilingual Transitional Approaches targets the same group, but its aim is gradually to phase out education in the first language as soon as pupils have reached a reasonable degree of competence in English.

In regard to LOTE in primary schools, it should be noted that there have recently been changes to funding procedures. As from 1992 the Commonwealth Government has replaced the ESP with the Community Language Element (CLE), whereby funds are channelled directly to systems instead of ethnic organisations. This means that in 1993 the Catholic Education Commission could not guarantee COASIT its role as the main provider of Italian insertion classes. The CEO is therefore looking at ways of addressing this problem so that the teaching of Italian will not suffer.

The Status of Italian in the Catholic Schools Systemic Secondary Schools

According to information kindly provided by the CEO, the systemic Secondary Schools of the Archdiocese of Sydney have at present nine languages in their curriculum: Latin, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Arabic, Japanese, Vietnamese and Indonesian. Of these the most widely chosen in 1991 was Italian (4,214 enrolments), followed by French (3,306 enrolments), and this in spite of the fact that both Romance languages have been offered by fewer schools since 1988. Female enrolments exceeded male enrolments 2,558 to 1,656. The 27 schools where Italian was most popular were those of the South-Western Region (12 institutions), followed by the Inner West Region (10). Only two schools of the Eastern Region offered Italian. The year-by-year breakdown for Italian enrolments was: Year 7 (1,667), Year 8 (1,610), Year 9 (320), Year 10 (283), Year 11 (150), Year 12 (184).

Education Officer Levane Abdoolcader notes that the dramatic drop in the latter figures after Year 8 is of particular concern to the CEO. 'At present the greatest

degree of participation is occurring in the first two years of secondary school, mainly in compulsory courses of the 'language experience' or 'taster' type.' The CEO is anxious to remedy this situation where planned continuity in the study of LOTE from primary to junior secondary and beyond is non-existent.

Italian at the Australian Catholic University (ACU)
ACU is one of the newest higher education institutions in Australia. It was created from the amalgamation of four teaching and nursing colleges with eight campuses spread through Queensland, NSW, the ACT and Victoria.

At the Strathfield Campus (NSW) two languages are being taught within the BA program: Italian and Japanese, both of which are offered as majors. Mercy Campus, Melbourne, also has Italian as part of its BA program.

The intake for the whole of the BA program at Strathfield in 1992 was about 40, 25 of whom joined the Italian course. Since there will be increased demand for language teachers in 1996, the ACU has decided to open the course to Bachelor of Education Secondary students, and as from next year to the BEd Primary students. The ACU is also planning to offer an L2 teaching methodology course, and intends to set up an Italian Curriculum Unit (Dip Ed) as a postgraduate course in the very near future.

2.3 The 1980s

In the 1980s the pattern of steady but not dramatic growth in the numbers of students studying Italian in the final year of secondary school continued in most States up until 1986, with Italian maintaining its position as the third most widely studied language at matriculation level with 2,381 candidates, with Victoria and NSW each contributing about 800 (Lo Bianco 1987:28-29).

The language survey conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in May 1983 found that the Italian background group was still by far the major group in Australia of non-English speaking origin, with 440,776 persons, while among the 'language(s) first spoken by Australians aged 5 to 14 years' Italian had 555,300 speakers, i.e. 3.9% of the population (Lo Bianco 1987:11). The same source found that 'Of the 1.7 million NESB people ... [those] from Southern European or Middle Eastern countries or Vietnam generally use their first language much more (80-90%) than people from Northern Europe (20-30%) or those of Chinese origin' (op. cit.: 24).

The Commonwealth Department of Education *National survey of language learning in Australian schools* conducted in 1983 confirmed the overall position of Italian as the third most popular language (4.13% of all students) after French (7.45%) and German (4.58%). In primary schools, however, Italian was by far the most commonly studied language, with 3.5% percent of all primary children studying it in about 5% of schools (Commonwealth Department of Education 1986:17). Proportions of students in Italian courses increased from lower to upper primary, and from primary to lower secondary, whereas they fell steeply in upper secondary (op. cit.: 11 and 17).

At the time of the 1983 survey the Community Languages Program in NSW Government schools had been in place for two years, the South Australian bilingual experiments were continuing with some State and Commonwealth Government (Multicultural Education Program) funds. Victoria, after considerable experimentation with bilingual programs and curriculum development (again helped by the Commonwealth MEP), had just embarked on its own co-ordinated program in primary schools (Di Biase and Dyson 1988:37-53).

Year	Primary	Secondary
1961	?	1,431
1969	?	6,161
1975	13,692	21,528
1983	94,077*	59,748
1988	170,285**	72,579
1991	198,736	73,334

Table 2.3
Three decades of growth: Students of Italian in Australian schools 1961-1991
** This estimate of 94,077, is based on 3.3% of primary school children studying Italian according to the 1983 Commonwealth Department of Education survey (1986) plus the insertion classes number for that year. Righetto (1987:159) referring to 'a forthcoming publication of a Commonwealth Department of Education survey of the study of languages other than English' reports that there were 153,845 primary children learning Italian. The percentage of primary school children studying Italian is given as 13% (ibid.) as against the much lower figures that actually appeared in the publication referred to by Righetto.*
*** DEET (1990a) figure for 1988 is 136,276 primary students. This has been adjusted to include insertion classes in NSW for that year. It is likely that even so the figure of 170,285 is somewhat lower than it should be for that year.*

As already noted Italian was a much more common feature of Catholic schools whether systemic or independent than Government and other schools since it was offered by 21.9% of Catholic schools compared with 7.0% of other and 5.1% of Government. This pattern was true at all levels of schooling, although the Government schools, while lagging behind in the primary, picked up in the secondary so the comparison was 16.0% Government, 46.5% Catholic and 9.1% other.

It needs to be pointed out that the decision made here to present data from the 1983 Commonwealth Department of Education survey in the form of percentages, blurs the fact that every percentage point in Government schools represents three to four times more students than a percentage point of total student numbers in non-government schools. Similarly, every percentage point in the primary school represents about 1.25 times as many pupils as in the secondary school. It must not be overlooked therefore that there had been a tenfold increase in pupils studying Italian in the primary school in less than ten years (Table 2.3).

It is possible to present another aspect of the provision of Italian across Australian schools by looking at the percentage of schools teaching Italian in 1983. Using this criterion Western Australia (12.8% of schools), the ACT (12.7%) and South Australia (12.1%) emerged as predominant, followed well behind by Victoria (9.5%) and then the other States and Territories. This pattern was more or less in evidence at the various levels of schooling, although the Victorian figure rose considerably at the secondary level. Nationally 8.6% of schools were teaching Italian.

The data on the States and Territories were also expressed as the proportion of students who were studying Italian (number per 10,000 students). Using this

criterion South Australia and Victoria with 692 and 629 respectively emerged as the States with the highest proportion of their students studying Italian. They were followed by Western Australia (428), the ACT (352) and NSW (286). All other States and Territories had a creditable number participating in Italian courses. This pattern was maintained at the various levels of schooling, although Western Australia was a close challenger to South Australia and Victoria in the upper secondary, and the ACT was similarly close in the upper primary.

The unprecedented growth in the teaching of Italian at all levels in the 1980s was due to the multicultural orientation often accompanied by explicit policies adopted by the States and the Commonwealth, which in turn promoted language maintenance and language support programs such as the Multicultural Education Program at the Commonwealth level, mentioned earlier, which generated in each State a Multicultural Education Co-ordinating Committee. In most cases this was the first government body looking at multicultural issues in education. At State level most of the programs and policy statements emerged strongly in this decade, as exemplified by the Community Languages program in NSW in 1981, the 1983 draft policy, *Voices for the Future*, which followed practical initiatives already in place in South Australia, and the Ministerial Policy statement in Victoria in 1984. These developments are extensively discussed in Di Biase and Dyson (1988) and Clyne (1991). The largest contribution, however, in terms of the number of primary schools and students involved in Italian comes from the expansion of insertion classes, supported by the Ethnic Schools Program. This is discussed in greater detail below.

Toward the end of the decade, estimates for 1988 placed the total number of students of Italian in Australia, including tertiary students, between 230,000 and 260,000 (Di Biase 1989:189). *The National Survey of Language Learning in Australian Schools: 1988* (Commonwealth DEET 1990a) reporting a total of 208,855 students of Italian in primary and secondary schools broadly confirms the estimate. The lower figure can be attributed to the fact that the data available to DEET at the time of the survey were not complete for all the school systems and to the fact that the survey attempted to exclude insertion classes from the calculation, an operation which not only did not succeed, but managed to blur the picture as far as the primary school was concerned. The survey asked the school systems not to count after-hours and insertion classes, because these were offered under the (then) Ethnic Schools Program. However DEET (op. cit.: 1) believes that 'there is considerable probability that data for primary schools at least includes some insertion programs run by Ethnic Schools'.

Thus according to the survey (op. cit.: 3-5) the number of primary-aged children who were learning Italian was far ahead of the numbers studying other LOTEs: 136,276 compared with 18,635 for German, which was the next most commonly studied language. Over 61% of primary students were reported as learning Italian. According to the historical pattern considerably more of these students across Australia were in the Catholic rather than the Government or Independent systems. Nevertheless the number in primary schools is understated in this survey, as indicated, because the NSW Government school system, for instance, did not count insertion classes, while other States must have included them. Indeed this should have been the case particularly for Victoria which is reported in the survey as having 24,865 primary school children studying Italian in Government schools. The same schools in 1987 reported 6,885 children studying

Italian (Lo Bianco 1989). The number could not have trebled within twelve months!

2.4 The Development of Insertion Classes: Issues and Concerns

It was in this time of buoyancy, generally accepted multicultural orientation and relative prosperity that a spectacular expansion of Italian in the primary schools took place thanks to the direct funding of insertion classes. Contrary to the expectations of the promoters, the phenomenon remained largely limited to the primary school, or at best it may have exercised some influence in the lower secondary school. It certainly did not affect the senior secondary nor the universities where Italian did continue to grow, but at the same or an even slower rate than it had done in the preceding decade.

In 1981, following a recommendation from the former Institute of Multicultural Affairs (AIMA) the Commonwealth Ethnic Schools Program was established for an interim period of two years, to assist ethnic schools including insertion classes. Of course ethnic schools had already been operating long before the ESP. So had some insertion classes, particularly in Victoria which in that year (1981) had 454 ethnic schools including 45 insertion classes, teaching about 35 languages to 31,345 children (Clyne 1982:72).

After the initial period of two years the (then extant) Commonwealth Schools Commission expressed reservations about the insertion classes:

> The Commission believes it is opportune to consider a change to funding of community language teaching activities through insertion classes. The insertion class is presently employed in schools to bridge between the desire of ethnic community organisations to sponsor the teaching of their language and culture and make such provision in the day school. The Commission has reservations about this approach, although it acknowledges that benefits have accrued to students who have been enrolled in them. It would prefer that these programs be the responsibility of the day schools, working in close collaboration with ethnic organisations, to ensure quality programs and reduce potential conflict in the day schools in respect of teaching methods and materials, disciplinary procedures and staff qualifications and duties (Commonwealth Schools Commission 1983: Recommendations ch. 7, para. 8).

The Schools Commission went on to recommend that the ESP should grant funds for community language teaching programs directly to day schools. The government rejected this recommendation (Harris 1984:1) and the insertion classes grew very quickly. They translated the concept of Italian as Australia's second language into a reality of the education system, at least in the mainstream primary school.

Italian community leaders were not happy with the separatism and with the inadequacy of resources for language maintenance programs. Insertion classes were part of a move to bring the Italian community and the Australian school

closer together. This must be seen as part of a wider move to integrate the Italian community into Australian society. The support in the Italian community for insertion classes Australia-wide was a reaction to the fact that 'for some administrators Italian is still seen just as an ethnic language rather than as an excellent second language'. *('Per alcuni amministratori [L'italiano] è rimasta soltanto una cosidetta lingua etnica, invece di essere considerata come un'ottima seconda lingua.')* The concept 'Get Italian out of the ghetto' gives the general mood of the discussions (Transcript 37:3). (Note that transcripts referred to in this Profile refer to interviews conducted by G. and H. Andreoni as part of their data collection for this report. The transcripts are held by the interviewers.) Smorgasbord language classes (or taster courses) are common especially in the junior secondary schools and share some of the characteristics of insertion courses such as limited time, beginner levels, exclusively 'second language experience' and lack of continuity, but they have not attracted as much criticism.

2.4.1 Why Did Insertion Classes Grow?

Insertion classes share the strengths and weaknesses of multicultural programs, but spread rapidly to hundreds of schools in almost all States because they 'responded to a huge demand in schools created by the inability of systems to provide LOTE in primary schools' (COASIT [Sydney] Directors' Report 1991: 25). This demand was driven more by the Australian-born second generation than by the first generation Italo-Australian (Gobbo 1988:182). Such demand could only be fulfilled if three crucial conditions were satisfied. Firstly, there had to be organisations that believed in and pursued the idea. These were the community-based committees discussed earlier, such as COASIT, CIAC and the Sunshine Coast Italian School Committee (SCISC), who exercised enormous amounts of energy and skills to find the resources and the teachers as well as to create the infrastructure. Secondly, resources had to be provided by funding bodies or through other avenues such as fees. The main two sources were the ESP and the Italian Government. Thirdly, the teachers had to be found. They emerged from the Italian community both from the first and second generation. The first had the language, but often no qualifications or none that were recognised by education authorities. The second had acquired teaching qualifications in Australia but, as for most second generation Italo-Australians, the language skills were acquired at home and were often left undeveloped due to lack of opportunity for formal study (Bettoni 1985b). Their language skills would rarely have reached the level required for use in a profession. Despite these limitations the teachers made the program possible even though they often worked under conditions much less favourable than the rest of their colleagues in the same school.

During the first few years of operation (1981-85), insertion classes were mainly established within the Catholic systemic schools, but currently they are also found in Government schools and a few Independent schools, and account for the great majority of children studying a LOTE in the primary school. This is a definite measure of success even if one agrees with Clyne that 'while giving children an introduction to language study, they seem to attract unrealistic expectations' (1991:123).

The primary schools were willing to introduce the study of a LOTE, but were not given the required number of teachers and levels of resources to do so by their respective school systems nor by the Commonwealth. For many schools the only chance to introduce the study of any language was to ask the communities. Thus, unlike other school language programs, the teacher is employed by a recognised Ethnic School authority, which also provides teaching direction and materials. The authority in turn receives Commonwealth funds on a (pupil) per capita basis, but also has its own autonomous sources of funds. This source, in the case of Italian committees, is primarily Italian Government assistance as discussed below. Other community languages, which did not have the same level of support from the respective source country were thus unable to avail themselves of the insertion class element of the ESP. In some cases community associations were perhaps unwilling to undertake a program similar to the Italian one, given the commitment of funds and energies it required, and given also that this kind of program was not directed to the children of their community, but had an intercultural function.

As an avenue for resourcing language programs in the day school funding from the Commonwealth ESP (in a mix with funds from an overseas government) has been used overwhelmingly by Italian community committees, rather than by other ethnic communities. Table 2.4 summarises Ethnic Schools Program funding for 1991. Italian absorbs nearly 70% of the funds and accounts for just over 70% all children funded by the program.

	Students	Amounts ($)
All Languages (52)	189,546	6,729,979
Italian	135,795	4,673,979
Italian as a proportion of all other Languages	71.43%	69.45%

Table 2.4
Ethnic Schools Program funding for 1991

Undoubtedly the ESP level of funding, at a yearly rate of $35 per student until 1989, and $38.50 subsequently, is insufficient to sustain a language teaching program unless other sources contribute. Thus if the Commonwealth Government spends the level of funds indicated in Table 2.4 the Italian Government is not far behind in financial support for the activities of the community-based committees. In a paper written by COASIT, Brisbane (15 October 1991:4), in reaction to the proposed transfer of the ESP funds to Government and non-government education systems, the breakdown of funds was given as follows:

DEET, Ethnic Schools Program	$290,400
Italian Government (Ministero degli Affari Esteri)	$200,000
Professional Development Seminars (Italian Government)	$100,000
Total	$590,000

COASIT and many other community-based school committees have resource centres for their teachers and provide teaching materials, advice and logistic and administrative support. In close connection with the *Direttore Didattico*, or local consular education officers (see Glossary) they provide in-service sessions for their teachers, sometimes with Italian visiting lecturers. They are able to send some teachers to Italy for language and cultural enrichment courses. The materials provided and most of the teacher development activities are substantially, when not totally, subsidised by the Italian Government.

2.4.2 Italian Government Role and Contribution

The Italian Government is able to fund language education activities of the Italian community-based school committees thanks to a 1971 Act of the Italian Parliament. This Act (n. 153) was originally meant to fund educational initiatives for children of Italian migrant workers abroad. When some of the Australian committees moved their Italian teaching activities into the mainstream school, they drew from the same source for assisting these new insertion programs.

The contribution from the Italian Government to the teaching of Italian in Queensland has been described as follows:

- funds made available to Italian community organisations to run Italian classes, courses for teachers, purchase of teaching materials, etc;
- the following technical personnel from Italy in each Australian State to community organisations, local Departments of Education, etc.: an *Italian Educational Officer (Direttore Didattico)* based at the Italian Consulate; an *Italian Advisory Teacher* attached to the local Department of Education;
- organisation of courses for Italian teachers with specialists coming from Italy;
- books and teaching materials sent from Italy (Marletta 1991:18).

In 1991 the Italian Government funding to the Queensland Italian community organisations to conduct insertion and after-hours classes in that State was approximately $A520,000. The ESP contribution for the whole of Queensland was, on the other hand, $478,842 (Table 1.7) which means that effectively there is an almost dollar-for-dollar matching of funds, even though this is not officially conceptualised as such by either government. Another important observation to make in this regard is that while the ESP funding has been practically frozen to 1986 levels, the Italian Government contribution to Italian teaching activities has more than doubled over the last four years.

	1987 $A	1991 $A
Didactic Directors and Language Advisers	720,000	1,320,000
Textbooks and teaching materials	150,000	650,000
Language teaching (schools)	1,050,000	2,137,000
Lettori (universities)	580,000	240,000
Scholarships and teachers' in-service (in Italy)	180,000	525,000
Subsidies to Italian Language newspapers and other media	62,000	122,000
Italian Institutes of Culture (Melbourne and Sydney)	1,150,000	1,400,000
Total	3,892,000	6,394,000
Variation 1987/1991		2,502,000
		(+64.3%)

Table 2.5
Italian Government support for language and cultural activities in Australia in 1987 and 1991 (estimates)
Sources: Italian Embassy, Canberra and other sources

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2.4.3 Concerns Among Community-based Committees

While the demand for Italian courses may well continue to grow, the ability of the community-based committees to provide them continues to be reduced, given current economic constraints. Not only was there a ceiling imposed in 1986 on the growth of the ESP, but as a consequence of the White Paper (DEET: 1991) the whole of the ESP was passed to the school systems for distribution to the community school committees. At the time of writing it is unclear what the future status of insertion classes will be and what further changes are proposed. Language classes are vulnerable to forces outside the classroom, such as changes in what are designated priority languages, one line budgets and the degree of community control.

In interviews and questionnaires as part of the research for this project, respondents referred to a whole range of difficulties that relate to classroom issues. Some of the criticisms were directed at the decision-making structures, which often operate in an *ad hoc* fashion. Other were related to the multiplicity of funding bodies and mechanisms which require constant input of submissions and data to a range of bodies. Another level of concern was the inadequate co-ordination and co-operation between the many governments involved, the Italian, Australian Commonwealth and State Governments, although co-ordination has been greatly improved with the appointment of extra *direttori didattici*, and six language advisers.

Several problems stem from the low status of non-system classes and the way such classes are at the mercy of changes in the political context. Respondents pointed out that policy, structures, terminology and funding could change with virtually no consultation. This created the very worst combination from a management point of view: all the work and responsibility and none of the control. Further, there was resentment that through these classes, Australia was getting language learning on the cheap and without the necessary degree of political and systemic commitment and long term planning.

Many of the administrators of such classes argue that finance (or indeed lack of it) is a critical issue. Some of the committees have succeeded in attracting additional funds through a levy or a fee from parents for the Italian program to be continued (e.g. the Italian School Committee, Sunshine Coast, and COASIT in some cases). There is discussion about whether or not such fees and levies should be collected given Australia's declared National Policy on Languages. (See Glossary.)

The main concern in the community is that the measures implemented with the White Paper (DEET: 1991) may bring about a slide in the offer of Italian courses and the loss of autonomy of community-based committees to the Departments of Education and the Catholic Education Office. Excessive demands on the committees may be difficult if not impossible to meet in terms of qualification and registration requirements for all teachers, strict managerial and teaching supervision and accounting and so on.

2.4.4 Antagonism Towards Insertion Classes

There is undoubtedly an ambivalent attitude on the part of the education systems towards Italian insertion language classes, but nowhere more so than when a review is conducted. The reasons for the ambivalence and negativism are difficult to uncover. The point is best illustrated by looking at some of the reviews of language classes that are not part of education systems. The concept that anthropologists call systemic structural violence, defined in Eckermann and Dowd (1988), seems to be evident in some of these reviews, which illustrate the vulnerability of non-systemic language classes to processes set in motion by those who wish to regularise them and impose uniformity.

Three reviews will be considered to illustrate the above point:

1 *Australia's Language: The Australian Language and Literacy Policy (1990)* with particular reference to the 'review' of the Ethnic Schools Program, i.e. the comments made in the White Paper (DEET 1991:79-80) regarding the ESP and the non-systemic classroom;

2 A Review of Italian Insertion Classes organised by COASIT in Primary Schools in the Archdiocese of Sydney (Catholic Education Office, Sydney, October 1990);

3 Italian Insertion Classes and After-hours Classes in State Primary Schools.

1 **Australia's Language: The Australian Language and Literacy Policy (1990)**
As part of the Green Paper, White Paper process, a full-scale review of the Ethnic Schools Program was promised, but did not eventuate. The *National Ethnic School Survey* for the Commonwealth Schools Commission (Norst (1982) required a great deal of time, skill and resources to ensure that this difficult and complex task was done properly. By 1991 the situation was even more complex, yet almost no time or resources were allocated to the task, nor was the need for specialist skills acknowledged. For the White Paper, no review was conducted and there was minimal consultation. The White Paper preferred to rely on a review of ethnic schools in South Australia by the Ethnic Schools Advisory Committee (1988).

From what was a review of ethnic schools in the State of South Australia, the White Paper authors selected a range of negative comments, and without further research applied them to all ethnic schools in order to justify drastic changes to the Ethnic Schools Program and a shift in the balance of power and resources from community-based structures to systemic educational organisations.

Instead of building on the success of the Italian language classes for the development of other LOTEs, the White Paper seemed to treat the expansion of Italian as an anomaly to be cut down to size. Italian was apparently caught in the Australian dislike of 'tall poppies', an attitude holding that anyone who achieves distinction should be subject to criticism to ensure that no-one rises above the average.

2 **A Review of Italian Insertion Classes organised by COASIT in Primary Schools in the Archdiocese of Sydney (CEO, Sydney, 1990)**
The ambivalence towards insertion classes is well illustrated in this review. Clearly the reviewer believes that the Catholic Education Office would be much better off running its own LOTE program which it would then control, in line with its LOTE policy, with total integration of language provision, student needs, language teaching methodology, teacher training, and a coherent, centralised curriculum. But it does not have the money to do this. As a response, the reviewer criticises COASIT, but not too seriously because there is no alternative:

> Overall, it is apparent that there is a desire to keep COASIT language program in the schools - either for the lack of any real alternative (that is as inexpensive and available) or because there is a widespread desire for second language learning in these schools (Catholic Education Office 1990:15).

> While the energy and resources that go into organising and conducting these Italian insertion classes may well deserve a more detailed, objective and constructive review, it is legitimate to ask why a source of funding similar to the one made available to community-based organisations was never made available to those system schools that desired to conduct or could justify having their own program. Clearly the way the Commonwealth handled the insertion classes issue from the beginning (ignoring for instance the 1983 Schools Commission's concerns) could not help but fuel the ambiguity and confusion of roles typical of this area of education.

3 **Italian Insertion Classes and After-hours Classes in State Primary Schools 1991, A Survey (Marletta, December 1991)**
When members of the Italian School Committee, Sunshine Coast, Queensland, who are highly successful organisers of insertion classes, and one of the key organisations included in Marletta's review, were asked to comment, they pointed out that the information the review gives about the classes they organise is incorrect, and that their sustained curriculum development program is dismissed. The number of pupils attributed by the review to the Italian School Committee is, they claim, under represented by 1,291. This lack of accuracy in the review is especially unfortunate in Queensland where Italian is not a nominated priority language and where classes are begun only when evidence of demand is presented and a case made.

The above examples of the misuse of the review process have led to a wariness among community-based organisations of sharing information with reviewers. Co-operation and self development become more difficult in such a climate. The impact is felt even in country areas. Small language classes organised in remote areas with under award payments to teachers without Australian qualifications are seen in this threatening review climate, not as initiatives to be admired, supported and improved, but as examples

that *'prestano il fianco alle critiche'* (lay oneself open to criticism) (Transcript 50: notes).

The Australian Government has shown itself only too willing to use these isolated and atypical instances of practices that would not satisfy the requirements of the education systems, to generalise about all Italian language classes managed by community-based organisations, regardless of the facts and the context. The reasons for such antagonisms are the subject of much debate and concern in the Italian community in Australia.

2.5 The Development of Italian in Australian Tertiary Institutions

As in the schools, Italian has taken up its position in Australian tertiary education almost completely within the last thirty years. The previous thirty years were an incubation period, and as already noted, Italian was recognised from the 1930s for admission to university. In 1950 Italian was taught only at the University of Sydney (Comin 1987:169). By 1964, with as few as 258 students in three universities, Sydney, Melbourne and Western Australia (Wykes 1966:51), Italian was the most popular of the small enrolment languages, coming after French, German and Latin. Wykes pointedly asked the question, 'Why is Italian taught in so few universities?' (op. cit.:30). Along with other languages used by immigrants, Italian was destined to grow in tertiary institutions as recommended by the Australian Humanities Research Council and by most of the reports that followed Wykes' initiatory one. The AHRC was sensitive to 'the diversity of national origins created in our community by immigration'. Its recommendation in Wykes' report that 'opportunities should be given to migrants and their children to maintain the study of their original tongue'(op. cit.: iii) was far-sighted, and came to fruition particularly in the 1980s.

	Institutions	Number of students	Source
1950	1 university	?	Comin 1987:169
1964	3 universities	258	Wykes 1966:25
1972	4 universities	670	Andreoni and Rando 1973:258
1974	7 universities	742	Hawley 1982:18
1974-1980	18 CAEs	141 to 673	Hawley 1982:18
1981	11 universities	1,507	Carsaniga 1983:412
1981	12 CAEs	570	Hawley 1982:9 & 18
1988	36 tertiary*	4,752*	Di Biase 1989:194
1988	Not reported	2,763	DEET 1990:22
1990	26 universities and institutes	885 EFTSU#	Leal et al: 1991
1992	25 universities	4,000 to 6,500	This report

Table 2.6
Italian in Australian tertiary institutions

** This set of figures for 1988 is based on data collected by the Italian Embassy in Canberra. The number of students may be overestimated as some institutions may have given figures based on enrolments in courses/units, i.e. the same student may have enrolled in more than one Italian course/unit. However, since the basis for calculation of student numbers is not uniform across institutions, DEET's figure for student numbers in 1988 may also be less than accurate. The numerical truth may be somewhere between the two. (discussion on EFTSU)*

 # EFTSU: Equivalent Full Time Student Units, a notional unit of funding which does not reflect necessarily the number of students enrolled, but is an accurate measure of resources allocated to a given subject area or a university.

According to one source, the Working Party on Language and Linguistics (1976:13) which states that there were 219 students enrolled in Italian university courses in Australia in 1973, and that this enrolment was stable, there had been no growth registered for Italian over the previous decade. A different source, however, almost triples that figure to 670 in four universities (Andreoni and Rando 1973:258). The latter figure is supported by the study by Hawley (1982) who finds that by 1974 Italian was offered at seven universities spread over four States and the ACT: Sydney (with the largest department), Melbourne, New England, La Trobe, Flinders, Western Australia and the Australian National University.

In the second half of the 1970s, Italian continued to grow rapidly in most States at almost the rate of German and French. In that period the increase in the number of students of Italian 'accounts for 47% of the overall increase in all languages' (Hawley 1982:27). At the beginning of the 1980s Italian was present in eleven universities and in all States and the ACT and students had the opportunity to pursue studies in Italian beyond the basic three year degree in six of these institutions.

2.5.1 Language Background and Tertiary Students of Italian

The language background of the majority of LOTE students is English. However using a LOTE or having a community language background correlates positively with both the study of the language of one's own ancestry and the study of languages in general, where a choice is available, as it is now in many universities. Hawley (1982:27) attributes 47% of the overall increase in all languages in tertiary institutions for the period 1975-1980 to the increase in Italian students, 40% of whom were of Italian background. And since 25% of the Italian students were also studying French, Hawley concludes that 'the slight increase in French students over the period may have been aided by the increase in Italian'.

Curiously enough, exactly the same proportion was recorded by Borland, George and Rando who conducted research among graduates who completed degrees including a LOTE major in Victoria in 1985-86 (as reported in Leal 1991:14.3). According to their research 'well over a third of the graduates (40%) spoke a language other than English at home'. This trend is reconfirmed by reference to the numbers students enrolling in Italian at the University of Sydney (ibid.). The proportion of students of Italian background is even higher among students enrolled in interpreting and translation courses in Italian at the University of Western Sydney. A similar tendency is evident in practically any of the languages offered. Further evidence of this phenomenon comes from the students' attitudes gathered from their responses to questionnaires as part of the research for this report, to be discussed in detail later on.

It appears that the more people know or use other languages, the more likely they are to want to take up language studies. This adds weight to the argument for having languages as a necessary part of the school education of every student. The education system can impose an educated guess in the choice of languages in the secondary school, but it cannot predict at all what language(s) particular individuals might need in their lives and careers decades in the future. It follows

that an intelligent course of action would aim to impart a sufficient and positive experience of second language learning before exit from school and, at the same time preserve and enrich existing language resources in society.

2.5.2 The Contribution of the Colleges of Advanced Education

The Colleges of Advanced Education (CAEs) were a tertiary system created to meet regional demand for higher and professional education unmet by the universities. While the proportion of language students in Australian universities at the end of the 1970s was about 7%, which represents 21-23% of Arts students (Hawley 1982:62), the ratios were much lower in the newly established Colleges of Advanced Education which by 1981 had barely 1% of their 165,000 enrolments in language courses (ibid.).

During the more multicultural and community oriented environment of the 1970s, Italian did better than any other language in the CAEs. Even though courses in languages in the CAEs were offered at times only for a brief spell and often with small enrolments, by 1980 Italian was taught in eighteen CAEs. With just under 700 enrolments, it accounted for 30% of all language enrolments in CAEs, particularly in Victoria and South Australia. In Hawley's words 'the increase in Italian may (have been) due to pressure from migrant groups as an attempt to have more Australian teachers able to understand the language of their children' (1982:77). At the start of the 1980s Italian was still taught in twelve of these institutions.

The CAEs were rather creative in their response to the demand for language education. Their strongly professional and community-based orientation often led them to introduce languages as part of courses in teacher education, interpreting and translation training, social work, nursing, multicultural studies, and so on. Unfortunately, given the small enrolments and other factors of structural weakness in the CAE sector (e.g. their funding was lower than that of the universities) such courses were as easily terminated as they were started, with every twist and turn or successive waves of amalgamations, or as soon as resources dwindled.

Languages in CAEs were hardly ever adequately staffed. In most cases they were built bottom-up often with only one person who would usually be placed in the lower academic ranks. At times the only staff member may have been casual and part-time. That person would be stretched over a range of specialisations which in universities would be covered by different academics. Furthermore, the workload and the prevailing academic environment did not usually allow much scope for language staff to improve their qualifications.

2.6 Factors Contributing to the Growth of Italian Prior to the National Policy on Languages

It may be convenient to draw together at this point the factors that contributed to the growth of Italian prior to the formulation of the National Policy on Languages (Lo Bianco, 1987). As discussion so far has shown, these factors developed both within the society at large and the Italian community. Among the most salient are the massive immigration of Italians to Australia after World War II and the increasing presence of their children in schools and universities. Other significant factors are the valuing of language learning and language maintenance by the Italian community, and its desire for the language to be adequately represented in education institutions; the role of the Catholic church; the rise of multiculturalism; and the political weight acquired by the Italian community, together with its capacity to gather resources from both the Australian and Italian Governments to support the teaching of the language in schools.

Italian came into Australian education, as Totaro (1990: loc. cit.) maintains, because of its cultural value. It is equally certain that the consistent pattern of growth in the study of Italian, as suggested in the historical survey above, is due to the large-scale post-war migration of Italian people to Australia, the increasing presence of Italian-background students in the education system and the support given by them and their parents to language maintenance. In 1975 the *Working Party on Language and Linguistics in Australian Universities* (1976:48-50) chaired by Leonie Kramer reported that '[it] was aware of considerable pressure from migrant groups for the introduction in Australian universities of studies in the language and cultures of the countries of their origin. It believes that this pressure is both natural and desirable ... Too often children have been discouraged from ... keeping alive a language skill which they already possess, because opportunities for formal study have not been available'.

The above quotation indicates the role of academic commentators in highlighting the gap between social realities and educational institutions. Wykes (1968:81) suggested as early as 1968 that Italian should be offered as a second foreign language in the schools, and her views were echoed by the influential Australian Humanities Research Council. On a different tangent, but in the same period, Holt (1967:28) argued for the widespread teaching of nine languages at all levels of the Australian education system to improve Australia's economic competitiveness and international relations. The nine languages sound familiar: German, Italian, Japanese, Spanish, French, Chinese, Malay-Indonesian, Modern Greek and Russian. The list almost exactly matches the languages proposed twenty years later by the National Policy on Languages. Holt (op. cit.: 51) and the 1961 UNESCO Education Abstract he was quoting can be regarded as prophetic: 'There are a number of reasons for learning a language in any educational institution - not one! But the "outstanding feature of recent trends in modern language teaching is the marked shifting of emphasis to the utilitarian aspect." ... "Distance is no longer a barrier between different nations and peoples, but language, unhappily, still too often is." '

The historical, religious and linguistic affinity of the Catholic Church with Italian culture played a major role in giving that enormous cultural and linguistic reservoir a legitimate place within the education system. About half of all Italian-born and second generation children of Italian-Australian parents were

in Catholic schools, forming by far the largest concentration of community language background pupils. Thus the broad social justice orientation of the Church, together with the decreasing use and significance of Latin in its liturgy, contributed enormously in the last three decades to making Italian the second language in the Australian Catholic education system.

Much of the growth of Italian teaching across systems in the primary school, largely to children not of Italian background, is due to the sustained efforts during the 1980s of the Italian community-based school committees (such as COASIT), and the enthusiasm of the many teachers who took on the task. This effort could not have been deployed without the two mainsprings of resources discussed above, the Commonwealth (first through the Multicultural Education Policy then the Ethnic Schools Program) and Italian Governments' financial as well as human and material contribution.

In Government schools a key role was played by the school-based orientation that emerged strongly in the 1970s and continued in the 1980s. Schools became much more willing than in the past to respond to the perceived needs of the school community. In 1983, for instance, nearly 8% of students across Australia were of Italian background (op. cit.: 21) with high concentrations in the inner suburbs of Melbourne, Adelaide, Perth and Sydney. The recognition of the languages used in and around the school prompted some schools to introduce languages in their school-based program and curriculum thanks to State programs such as the NSW community languages programs which based their rationale precisely on that recognition (Di Biase and Dyson 1988:2-3).

2.7 Italian After the National Policy on Languages

The efforts initiated in the 1970s to arrive at a national language policy (documented in Clyne 1991:3-22) gathered momentum and national significance with the 1982-84 work of the Senate Standing Committee on Education and the Arts which released its report on *A National Language Policy* in 1984. The process peaked at government level with the *National Policy on Languages* (Lo Bianco 1987). The Senate's report had suggested that priorities should be identified and that among these there should be 'two or three community languages', as well as a number of Asian and 'world' languages (1984:159-162). Unlike the Senate, the NPL did explicitly include Italian as one of the identified nine languages of wider teaching (1987:125). These were nominated for their national (social or cultural), regional, or international and commercial significance. This important recognition reflects primarily the socio-cultural, hence national, significance of Italian in Australia and may have given it a boost in the years immediately following the release of the National Policy on Languages. Most of the factors that had promoted the teaching of Italian had already been well in place before the Senate's inquiry.

The resultant benefit for Italian from the NPL did not materialise as a further expansion of teaching programs, but rather as the building up of a broad rationale for maintaining the relevant teaching programs within a national policy, and in the enrichment that has come from national projects such as the Australian Language Levels (ALL) curriculum guidelines (Scarino et al. 1988). The NPL also funded specifically Italian projects, including significant

curriculum development, such as the Victorian project, *In compagnia*, which undoubtedly will acquire national importance as soon as it is fully published.

2.7.1 Towards the 1990s

The most significant trends in Italian teaching in the years since the adoption of the National Policy on Languages by the Commonwealth Government, appear to be on the one hand a decline nationally in numbers of students studying Italian in Year 12, while on the other hand the numbers in primary school continue to grow in the 1990s, but more slowly than in the 1980s. The secondary school as a whole presents a rather mixed situation, but the overall figure is stable. Figure 2.1 offers a summary, and a comparative view of the number of students of Italian in primary and secondary school in 1988, the first year of the NPL, and in 1991.

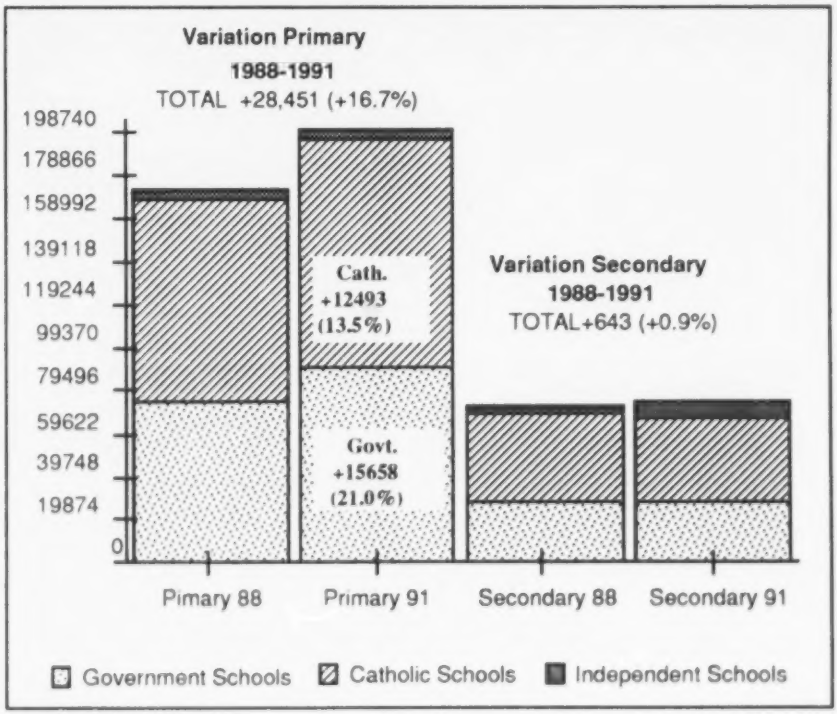

Figure 2.1
Italian across education systems 1988-1991

In spite of the ceiling imposed on the growth of insertion classes since 1986, the overall primary contingent continues to increase, which confirms the popularity of Italian. This is happening of course particularly in those States and parts of the systems where Italian had been somewhat constrained or had not fully realised its potential during the 1980s. Hence the increase is faster in Government schools (21%) than in Catholic schools (13.5%), and particularly in Western Australia, the ACT, South Australia, Queensland and Tasmania. Victoria's increase is modest, but it is occurring where Italian already has a very large presence, while the Northern Territory's decline, though significant, may be due to specific contingencies, such as its small base, or fluctuations in teacher

availability at any particular point. The unique nature of the figures for the study of Italian in the Northern Territory is confirmed by the increase in the figures for secondary school (Maddalozzo: personal communication), an increase which goes against the general trend.

NSW is the only State which actually shows a significant drop in the 1990s, both in the Catholic and Government schools. The slide is more marked in the former which is devoting greater attention to the newer and increasing ethnic groups within its schools, as it has always attempted to do according to its policy. By 1988 in the Sydney Archdiocese there were already 7,184 Arabic speaking students in its schools, with students of Italian backgrounds forming the second largest group, numbering 6,839 (Abdoolcader, 1988:5).

	Government Schools		Catholic Schools		Independent Schools		Total		Variation 1988/1991	
	1988	1991	1988	1991	1988	1991	1988	1991	no.	%
NSW	29,578	26,379	17,949	14,500	856	1,603	48,383	42,482	-5,901	-12.2
Qld	8,710	9,781	3,838	9,444	39	NA	12,587	19,225	6,638	52.7
SA	6,799	8,009	3,163	8,775	521	864	10,483	17,648	7,165	68.3
Tas	45	398	425	389	54	-	524	787	263	50.2
Vic	24,865	31,178	58,668	57,904	1,011	438	84,544	89,520	4,976	5.9
WA	3,465	13,700	7,000	12,270	437	313	10,902	26,283	15,381	141.1
ACT	429	613	1,022	1858	-	-	1,451	2,471	1,020	70.3
NT	829	320	582	-	-	-	1,411	320	-1,091	-77.3
Total	74,720	90,378	92,647	105,140	2,918	3,218	170,285	198,736	28,451	16.7
Variation 88/91	(20.9%)	15,658	(13.5%)	12,493	(10.3%)	300				

Table 2.7
Primary students of Italian in Government, Catholic and Independent school systems in Australia in 1988 and 1991
1. Victoria: Catholic schools 1991 is the figure for 1990
2. NSW: 1988 DEET figures were incomplete and have been adjusted
3. NSW: Independent schools 1991 is the figure for 1992
4. Northern Territory: Government schools 1991 figure includes other schools
5. Tasmania: 1991 shows the 1992 figures; Catholic figure includes Independent schools
Sources: DEET (1990a) and information supplied by the respective State education departments and systems

Western Australia is by far the fastest growing State in the teaching of Italian both in primary and secondary school. The increase in Western Australia together with that in South Australia is large enough to offset the losses in the secondary school in the other States. The development in Western Australia is unique in that most of the increase in the numbers taking Italian in the secondary system seems to be in the Independent schools, where Italian appears to have grown by a factor of fifteen between 1988 and 1991. The size of this increase may be overstated in the figures because many Independent colleges run both primary and secondary grades, and it is difficult to separate the totals. However the increase is there, whether upper primary or secondary, and accounts for most of the growth for Italian in Independent schools at the national level. Government secondary schools in Western Australia also report an increase, however modest, while Catholic systemic schools register a significant drop (Table 2.8).

In secondary schools, contrary to the trend in primary schools, Italian has declined since 1988. The slide, while not dramatic in quantitative terms, is faster in the Catholic system (-7.4%) but is also apparent in Government schools (-0.8%) almost everywhere. Significant decreases are registered in the NSW, South Australia and Queensland Government schools and in the Catholic schools of Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia. Significant increases are found

in Catholic schools in South Australia and Government schools in Victoria (mainly in the junior secondary) and Western Australia. As has been remarked, the latter State also accounts for most of the increase registered nationally in the Independent schools.

	Government Schools		Catholic Schools		Independent Schools		Total		Variation 1988/1991	
	1988	1991	1988	1991	1988	1991	1988	1991	no.	%
NSW	4,437	3,855	4,175	4,214	1,610	1,997	10,222	10,066	-156	-1.5
Qld	1,932	1,504	1,978	911	0	0	3,910	2,415	-1,495	-38.2
SA	2,025	1,722	3,865	4,697	4	0	5,894	6,419	525	8.9
Tas	300	194	581	592	354	**	1,235	786	-449	-36.4
Vic	17,005	17,976	26,145	24,045	357	439	43,507	42,460	-1,047	-2.4
WA	2,562	2,813	3,768	3,149	265	3,960	6,595	9,922	3,327	50.4
ACT	194	97	974	773	**	**	1,168	870	-298	-25.5
NT	80	139	80	257	0	0	160	396	236	147.5
Total	28,535	28,300	41,566	38,638	2,590	6,396	72,691	73,334	643	0.9
Variation 88 /91	(-0.8%)	-235	(-7.4%)	-2,928	(146.9%)	3,806				

Table 2.8
Secondary students of Italian in Government, Catholic and Independent school systems in Australia in 1988 and 1991
1. NSW: Catholic figures refer to Sydney Archdiocese only
2. Queensland: Catholic figures for 1988 refer to Brisbane Archdiocese only
3. Victoria: Catholic 1991 is the figure for 1990
*** Counted together with other systems*

Western Australia confirms, in an interesting way, the underlying trends in the teaching of Italian. It is the State with the largest concentration of Italian speakers relative to other language groups. The number of speakers of Italian in WA in fact is greater than the total of the next four largest language groups (Clyne 1991:50), and has a substantial history prior to the post World War II mass migration. There is a strong second generation and a high level of social integration in the broad community. Despite this, the teaching of Italian in Western Australia experienced a slower pace of growth during the 1980s except in the Catholic schools. In the early 1990s the latter are registering a decrease in secondary school, while the other systems are registering an increase. At the same time there is an increase in the numbers in primary school across the board in a way that reflects more closely the demography of the State on the one hand, and the popularity of Italian in primary school on the other.

2.7.2 Trends in Catholic Schools

Italian was dropped from five secondary schools (out of twenty-eight) in the Sydney Archdiocese between 1988 and 1991 (Abdoolcader 1991), but it has not lost its appeal. In a recent survey of students in a Sydney Catholic boys' school, Years 7-12, Italian was a close third choice after Japanese and German. This school has an enrolment of about 600 and did not offer any languages. The students were asked to indicate a possible preference out of seven nominated languages which they ranked in the following order: Japanese (24%), German (22%), Italian (21%), followed by Arabic (13%), Chinese (10%), Spanish (8%), and Indonesian (3%). The students are of predominantly English-speaking background but there is a significant enrolment of boys with Arabic, Italian and Cantonese-speaking backgrounds amongst others (ibid.).

Among the most common reasons for choosing Italian given by the students surveyed, 'strong family and community links' featured prominently while many mentioned 'primary study' in Italian. Interestingly, for the younger students (Years 7 and 8), Italian was the first choice ahead of Japanese, which was chosen for reasons connected with 'the future', 'influence in Australia', 'business, career, technology links'.

Among the more than one hundred parents who were surveyed, Italian was the second choice after Japanese. The reasons the parents gave for choosing Italian, as was the case with the students, were mainly of an integrative character, for example family and cultural ties, while the reasons given for Japanese were mainly of a utilitarian nature, such as career, trade and so on. Thus instrumental and integrative reasons seem to be, broadly speaking, in mutually exclusive distribution. While the cultural, family and travel reasons are paired with Italian, career, business and trade reasons are linked with Japanese. There are of course exceptions, but this seemed to be the pattern of thinking.

The above was a practical survey to canvass student and parent opinion to help the school decide what language(s) to offer. The results were expressed in a short summary form. Bearing this in mind, it is nevertheless interesting to compare these results with the study on students' attitudes to language study reported below (in Chapter 5). The latter appears to support the proposition that if there is a mix of instrumental and integrative motivations there is a better chance of support for sustained language study.

2.7.3 Trends in Independent Schools

Independent schools are of interest when gazing into the crystal ball to determine trends in education. Being a smaller aggregate, Independent schools can respond to both ephemeral and enduring external pressures more quickly than larger aggregates such as the Departments of School Education of NSW or Victoria. As has been discussed earlier the position of Italian in Independent schools is relatively unimposing and even precarious. It may often depend on the determination, or lack thereof, of very few individuals: a handful of parents or an influential teacher will be sufficient to determine the fate of a language course.

	Primary Schools			Secondary Schools		
	1988	1990	1991	1988	1990	1991
Italian	1,011	766	438	1,368	1,267	877
French	2,040	2,323	3,424	18,923	17,499	18,461
German	847	1,378	2,084	7,416	8,121	8,446
Chinese	113	1,625	2,051	2,004	4,504	5,702
Japanese	526	1,560	2561	3,506	5,876	8,282
Arabic	294	320	573	294	320	616
Spanish	55	95	140	61	96	140

Table 2.9
Students in Italian and other selected languages in Independent Schools (Victoria) 1988-1991
Source: Association of Independent Schools of Victoria Inc

In Victorian Independent schools from 1988 to 1991 one detects the following trends:

1 Italian is decreasing and more rapidly so in primary than in secondary schools;
2 The more traditional (foreign/modern) languages such as French and German are either stable or growing, but slowly, both in primary and secondary schools;
3 Asian languages such as Chinese and particularly Japanese are increasing at a fast or very fast rate both in primary and secondary;
4 'Newer' community languages, which are also international languages, e.g. Arabic and Spanish, are also increasing, albeit not as dramatically as Chinese and Japanese.

The trend seen in Victorian Independent schools for Italian to decrease is not uniform throughout Australia, and is contradicted at least in Western Australia where the numbers studying Italian in Independent schools have increased from a few hundred in 1988 to well over 3,000. However, the contraction in the teaching of Italian in Victoria must cause considerable concern to educators and authorities interested in Italian, especially in the light of other signals such as the decline of interest in the language in Year 12.

2.7.4 Decline in Year 12

For the first time in the last twenty years, Year 12 candidature in Italian is declining. The slide, which has begun with the 1990s, while not dramatic nor uniform across States, represents nevertheless a shift in direction which should cause concern, given the vitality of Italian in other areas of education and in society.

Historically the Year 12 Italian candidature was increasing steadily from the 1960s right up to 1989-90 (Tables 2.1 and 2.10). Its growth in the 1980s continued at a sustained pace, but was in no way comparable with developments in the primary and, to a lesser extent, the junior secondary areas. During the 1970s and 1980s the average annual increase nationally was about one hundred candidates. This growth, however, came to a halt between 1989 and 1990, and moved into negative values in 1991 and 1992.

	Number of Year 12 candidates in Italian by State							
	1978	1983	1986	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
NSW	285	563	805	808	907	850	757	723
Queensland	74	90	84	163	168	191	180	102
South Australia/NT	128	258	284	349	354	298	335	291
Tasmania	41	34	39	56	29	99	77	137
Victoria	638	664	857	842	753	820	752	759
Western Australia	273	241	340	358	384	344	396	373
ACT	12	40	38	34	107	105	77	59
Total	1,451	1,890	2,447	2,610	2,702	2,707*	2,574	2,444

Table 2.10
Year 12 candidates in Italian in Australia 1978-1992
Source: State and Territories education authorities.
** The White Paper Companion Volume (DEET 1991: 69) gives a much lower figure for Italian in Year 12 in 1990, i.e. fourth position at 2,415 behind Japanese at 2,536*

In 1992 there were fewer candidates in Italian than in the previous year in nearly every State, which represents a reduction to the level of interest achieved in 1986. Tasmania records an increase which is as remarkable as it is unstable given its small base. From 1991 to 1992 Victoria shows a very minor increase, while, Tasmania apart, the other States show a minor decrease, except Queensland, where the decrease is severe: more than one third of the candidature appears to have evaporated in one year. This trend is actually the reverse of what is happening at the primary level in that State.

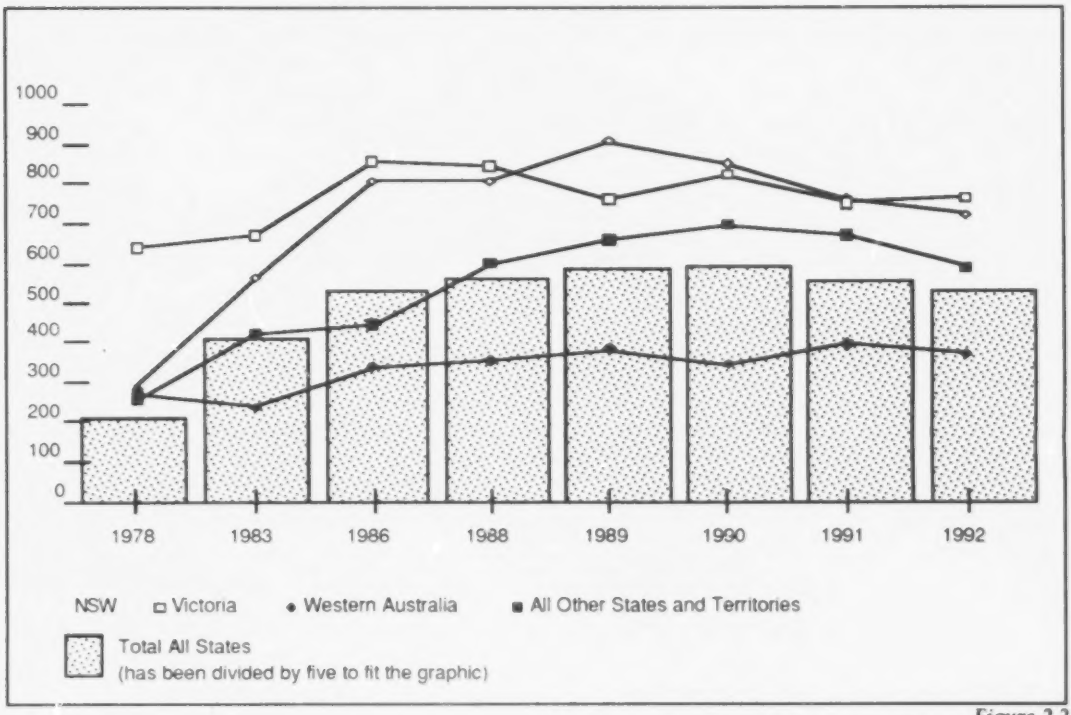

Figure 2.2
Italian Students in Year 12 All States 1978-92

The overall pattern of development as illustrated in Figure 2.2 would indicate that the immediate effect of the 1987 National Policy on Languages was positive for Italian, or at least it coincided with its continuing pace of growth. The process set in motion by the Green Paper, however, and culminating with the White Paper (DEET 1990b and 1991) coincided with a negative trend which is all the more remarkable on account of being an historical first, and against the stated intention and investment of the White Paper which sets out to reward Year 12 LOTE study in particular.

The Green Paper points out that in 1989 the national percentage of students taking a language at Year 12 level was 12.6%, a slight rise on the 1986 figure, but still well below the 14-15% which was characteristic in the late 1970s and until 1985. By 1990 the figure had shrunk, this time to 11.68%, the smallest proportion to date. However, the number of students sitting for matriculation examinations in languages had actually increased: from 17,928 in 1986 to 20,987 in 1990.

There is thus a contradiction between expanding student numbers and shrinking proportions of students studying languages in the final years of school. The shrinking proportion may be attributed to the Australian Government policy of increasing retention rates in the senior secondary, i.e. more secondary students were completing high school, but they were not taking languages.

If we take a bird's eye view of languages across levels, Italian may offer a useful insight for policy makers. Firstly, it is apparent that primary schools across the country have identified Italian, for reasons that range from educational to social and financial ones, as the preferred language for the introduction of a LOTE in the primary school. Secondly, it is also apparent that developments at one level (in this case primary) may have no significant effect on the other levels, in this case the numbers taking Italian at the senior secondary level. If there was a relationship between them, then the cohorts that studied Italian in primary school through the 1980s should have been showing up in the late 1980s and 1990s in senior secondary, but this growth did not occur. Finally the tertiary level is, by and large, still failing to respond to training needs generated by the increased demand in (especially primary) language teaching.

2.7.5 Italian at Tertiary Level Since the National Policy on Languages

The problems facing Italian in the 1990s need to be placed in the wider context of the position of languages in the tertiary system. The Green Paper (DEET 1990:22) commenting on the relative popularity of the main languages studied in higher education in 1988, reports that 'Students of French, Japanese, German, and Italian (the four most widely studied languages, in order) constituted 67.2% of the total. Students of Chinese and Bahasa Indonesian constituted a further 10.7%'. The suggestion was that French, German and Italian were maintaining their numbers, while Japanese was increasing. By August 1991, however, at the issuing of the White Paper, it became clear that the situation was changing in significant ways. The first four languages decreased their share to 61.5% of the total, but while Italian together with the other two European languages lost ground (French -3.2%, German -5.5% and Italian -2.7%), Japanese increased by one third in one year to 27.4%. Chinese and Indonesian also increased their share, but to a far more modest degree (Companion Vol., loc. cit.).

Another set of influences in the post-NPL picture is the wave of changes, such as the amalgamations of universities, CAEs, and Institutes of Higher Education, brought about by the 'Dawkins revolution'. The recently completed process of achieving a unified tertiary system (for example, RMIT and Phillip Institute were joined to form the Royal Melbourne Institute University of Technology in July 1992) has reduced the overall number of tertiary institutions, and has given university status to CAEs and Institutes of Technology or Higher Education.

In some cases restructuring brought a reduction in the choices of courses, particularly (and paradoxically) those which had a professional or vocational dimension. Although Deakin University, which incorporates the former Victoria College, has a Graduate Diploma of Arts: Interpreting and Translating, which includes Italian, there is currently no undergraduate course in Italian for the degree of Bachelor of Arts. The interpreting and translation courses in Italian

seem to have vanished from undergraduate studies, while by and large in Victorian universities 'amalgamations have resulted in a loss of positions for students in European languages and a slight increase for students in Asian languages' (Burley, 1992).

In South Australia, with the merger of the South Australian College of Advanced Education with the University of Adelaide, 'it was decided to discontinue the BEd (Secondary: Languages) and the Grad Dip Arts (Community Languages), with the last batch of students due to complete their courses in 1992. The BA (Interpreting/Translating) has also been suspended pending further consideration' (Rubichi, 1992:6). The professional orientation in language courses had been an important contribution of the former Colleges of Advanced Education to diversification in language teaching.

In the new unified system, less than 1% of higher education students completed a language unit in 1989 and in 1990. The overall EFTSU allocated in 1990 to languages in higher education was about 30% less than it had been in 1981 (DEET *White Paper Companion Vol.: 68-71*).

If these figures and the comparison made with the EFTSU are valid, there would be cause for great concern. The figure of 1%, however, can be called into question. There is no simple parallel between Hawley's (1982:18) figure of 10,222 language students enrolled in 1981 and the 7,288 EFTSU in 1990. Hawley's statistics are expressed as Student Enrolment Units, precisely defined as 'one person enrolled in one language course requiring at least two contact hours per week and lasting a full academic year, or a course of shorter duration requiring a minimum of 48 contact hours ... Only courses which are assigned credits/units toward the completion of a degree or diploma course have been considered' (op. cit.: 1).

On the other hand, the actual numbers of students presently studying languages in higher education is a mystery yet to be solved. This is largely because no proper study on numbers of languages students in higher education institutions during the 1980s has followed Hawley's 1981 study, and also because different units are used subsequently for comparison with Hawley's study, ranging from EFTSU (Leal et al.), undergraduates enrolled in language courses (NPL), students completing a language unit (Green Paper), and successful completion of a language unit (White Paper). So it is not clear whether in the 1980s '[T]here has been no significant growth in the proportion of undergraduates enrolled in language courses in universities and colleges of education' (NPL: 1987:30) or whether there has been a 'sharp decline' as the White Paper (Companion Vol. 1991:71) believes, or whether indeed it is likely that actual numbers have continued to rise (but by how much it is not possible to say), even though the proportions of students taking languages has fallen. The actual situation is clouded by a lack of comparable publicly available data.

2.7.6 Is Italian Growing or Declining in Universities?

As has been seen above, Italian grew from a single presence in 1950 in Australian tertiary institutions to nearly three out of four universities today: nothing short of a success story and an important credit to Australia's multicultural ethos. If the calculation on the basis of (minimum) five students per EFTSU is correct, then

it can be said that since Hawley reported 1,507 tertiary students of Italian in 1981, the number of students has increased threefold in the decade.

Yet this presence is relatively fragile, as has been discussed, and there are signs that it may be declining, although the evidence as to exactly what is declining and why is far from clear. As an illustration, Table 2.11 presents data abstracted from Rubichi (1992:8) giving the position of Italian in South Australian universities for the years 1990 to 1992.

	1990		1991		1992	
	Enrolments	EFTSUs	Enrolments	EFTSUs	Enrolments	EFTSUs
University of Adelaide			76	11.30	37	4.41
Flinders University	339	63.23	277	55.04	333	62.68
University of South Australia			279	24.81	274	20.94
SACAE	268	45.33				
SAIT	151	6.20				
Total	758	114.76	632	91.15	644	88.03
% variation on previous year			-16.6 (students)	-20.7 (EFTSUs)	+1.9 (students)	-3.4 (EFTSUs)

Table 2.11
Italian in South Australian Universities 1990-9
1. SACAE and SAIT were amalgamated with the three universities
2. Figures for University of SA include both Italian Degree Course and General Elective
Source: Based on Rubichi (1992:8)

A percentage calculation of the variation between one year and the next in South Australia's three universities yields the following pattern:

- 1990-1991: student enrolments decrease and resources (EFTSUs) decrease also, but at a faster rate;
- 1991-1992: student enrolments increase marginally, but resources continue to decrease (at a rate which is double the increase of the enrolments).

The sharp decline in languages in the universities between the beginning of the last decade and the start of the present one identified by the White Paper (Companion Vol.: 71) is therefore correct at least in the sense of the allocation of resources to languages. The picture is even more unfavourable if one considers two facts: that enrolments in Australian universities have grown every year (since the mid 1950s) at a rate which was rarely under 3%; and, secondly, that the value in dollar terms of the resources available to higher education per EFTSU has decreased in real terms over the decade (Bartos 1991:3).

	University of Sydney First Year Italian	
	No. of student enrolments	EFTSUs
1988	247	153.3
1989	223	150.6
1990	260	125.7
1991	266	150.8
1992	199	120.1

Table 2.12
First year enrolments and EFTSUs in Italian at the University of Sydney 1988 - 1992
Source: Dept of Italian, University of Sydney

It appears that Italian at tertiary level has been suffering from the combined effects of amalgamation (with the inevitable dislocations, threatened courses and restructuring) and an apparently constant overall decrease of resources. When the researcher questioned people in a number of Italian departments in

universities, their answers indicated first year enrolments in 1992 were between 5% and 25% lower than they were in 1991. Information from The University of Sydney is given in Table 2.12.

First year student enrolments in Italian were fairly stable at the University of Sydney between 1988 and 1991, but decreased in 1992. The Department of Italian, in the generally critical climate for Arts in the universities, has lost staff and resources, so that it has had to cut services such as the evening courses for part-time students. Under such conditions a decline in student numbers is unavoidable. A reduction in Italian at tertiary level, however, would not serve the best interests of Australia since current demand for high level linguistic and cultural competencies in Italian to service educational, economic and cultural needs in the Australian community can hardly be met by present levels of outputs from tertiary institutions.

2.7.7 Perspectives and Problems in TAFE After the National Policy on Languages

Languages in TAFE have only a fairly recent history, characterised by a fair amount of experimentation, often employing casual staff. Occasionally there have been successful innovations (e.g. interpreting courses) as well as inevitable failures and discontinuities given the conditions. Courses in LOTE have never been particularly conspicuous in TAFE, but in the present decade rather than an increasing presence, it seems that language courses in TAFE are rapidly declining in some States, as can be appreciated in the case of Italian (Table 2.13).

	Colleges 1990*	Colleges 1991	Colleges 1992	1991 No. of classes (Term 4)	1992 No. of classes (Term 1)	92/91 Variation
NSW	10	7	6	23	12	-47.8
Queensland	0	4	6	13	16	23.1
South Australia	5	1	1	7	6	-14.3
Tasmania	0	0	1	0	1	100
Victoria	6	5	5	18	14	-22.2
ACT	1	1	1	3	3	0
Western Australia	1	4	4	13	12	-7.7
Total	23	22	24	64	52	-18.7
No. of Students**	369	--	--	960	780	

Table 2.13
Italian in TAFE: Number of Colleges and Students by State 1990-1992
** Not all Colleges responded to 1990 survey (e.g. there may have been 4 more TAFE Colleges offering Italian in NSW as per NSW TAFE 1990 Handbook, and there may have been a few more in Queensland and Western Australia). There was a higher level of response in 1992, so figures for that year may reflect the situation more closely for the period covered.*
*** Number of students for 1990 is given by the references while number for 1991 and 1992 is calculated on the average TAFE class of 15 as suggested by Baker.*
Sources: Based on Baker and White 1991 and Baker (1992)

Between 1991 and 1992, with the exception of Queensland and Tasmania where an increase was recorded, there has been a marked decrease in the offering of Italian (and other community or European languages) in TAFE colleges overall, and particularly in NSW and Victoria. The general tendency towards 'fee for service', coupled particularly in NSW with the demotion of languages to low priority (the so-called 'hobby courses' assigned to Stream 1000) has dealt perhaps a fatal blow to the future of languages in TAFE. This is not due to lack of

demand, as most comments from the colleges testify, but to restructuring decisions and re-allocation of scarce resources. Increasing fees in time of recession, as commentators point out, will keep potential students away from languages, unless immediately necessary for the conducting of a job.

The TAFE sector in particular is bound to be driven more and more by the immediately foreseeable demand for specific (rather than broad) skills. Hence it will have to allocate resources according to short term demand, rather than medium to long term planning. In the absence of a rational TAFE strategy, these trends will most probably result in the loss to the TAFE area of language teaching expertise, which cannot be easily or quickly replaced whenever the need may arise. This would also deprive TAFE of one of its traditional core functions, i.e. providing educational services for the community in general and/or filling particular or complementary areas of training not directly tied into a full qualification. For instance a professional such as a teacher, a nurse or a social worker operating in an environment with a high population of new immigrants may require some training in a specific community language without necessarily desiring to do an interpreting course in that language.

If it is to carry out fully its role as a skills provider and trainer catering for the trades (if not for the whole community) TAFE would need to pursue with determination the 'professionalisation' of its language offering and make the courses more vocationally relevant. Such a course of action would avoid relegating languages to the hobby category. Indeed, while other providers may satisfy the continuing demand for general or continuing education, only TAFE has a specific brief to cater for industry and commerce, and hence it is the appropriate institution to develop languages courses for special purposes tailored to the needs of the trades and the professions, as it does with interpreting, language aides for schools, etc.

Specifically in reference to Italian teaching, for example in NSW, a forward-looking policy for TAFE must consider the following needs: Sydney is the chosen destination of the majority of Italian short term visitors and tourists, as well as being the capital of the State with the highest number of (metropolitan) Italian companies. It would seem opportune, then, to think about Italian language services requirements, e.g. for tourism and hospitality, conference hosting, business interpreting and bilingual secretarial assistance. The reality is that accountants, lawyers, researchers or other professionals operating in areas requiring expertise in Italian are hard put to find competent bilingual professional assistance. This is not the kind of specific competencies the university will develop. It is TAFE's job.

2.8 Issues and Factors Contributing to Change

The discussion here will be limited to changes attributable to major policy elements, since the factors more immediately related to the learners are extensively discussed in Chapter 5.

There are two important factors which at present affect the teaching and learning of languages, Italian among them. The first factor is the extent to which policy makers consider languages to be an important resource. If language

learning is considered desirable, then languages will be given back what many people consider to be their legitimate status within the core curriculum, making languages either compulsory or strongly recommended. Currently there are policy shifts in this direction in most States and Territories. In the senior secondary years languages could still be optional, but would be brought closer to central subject areas. Study of another language would become more desirable for senior secondary students if universities were to require a Year 11 and 12 LOTE study for given degrees (e.g. Arts or Business) or were to offer significant bonus points, as some of the Victorian universities are already doing. All languages, including Italian, would stand to benefit from policies which give recognition of the value of learning a second language.

The second factor concerns the making of judgements about the value of certain languages according to whether they are perceived to contribute towards particular ends. For example, there is currently strong government support in Australia for Asian languages, which are perceived to be of particular relevance on two grounds: regionalism and trade. In his report on *Asia in Australian Higher Education*, Ingleson (1989:36) leaves no doubts as to the extent and level of the effect of this policy:.

> The recent renewed commitment of Australian governments - both Commonwealth and State - to developing the study of Asia and its languages at all levels of the education system has already had a profound effect on tertiary institutions. The establishment of the Asian Studies Council, the support expressed by key people in business, and clear affirmations of the importance of the study of Asia by the Prime Minister, The Minister for Employment, Education and Training and other senior politicians, have all contributed to important changes in tertiary institutions.

In fact Leal et al. (1991:124) comment that there have been

> marked changes in priority, as the Government's strong financial support for community languages around the early 1980s was withdrawn and funding came to favour strategic and commercial languages. This has contributed to instability, discontinuity and dependence on one-off special purpose grants. It would have been far preferable to have a consistent government policy that encouraged the steady growth of broadly based language programs in higher education.

These policy changes may have been perceived by universities and State education authorities as major disincentives in the languages area as a whole.

The White Paper pointedly reiterates these changes by identifying 'Asian studies, including Asian Languages ... as a priority area', both for additional university places and for the National Priority (reserve) Fund for curriculum development projects (op. cit.: 17).

2.8.1 Languages: Multiculturalism Versus Trade - A Spurious Choice

In its effort to boost Australian trade, particularly export trade, the Australian Government encouraged the identification and teaching of languages which would assist exports. These 'languages for trade' were the subject of two recent reports. In their report to AACLAME (1990), Stanley, Ingram and Chittick found

that nine languages were viewed by exporters as most in demand: Mandarin, Japanese, Arabic, Indonesian, Korean, Thai, Spanish, German and French in approximately that order. Valverde in her report (1990), cites a similar list of languages as deemed by exporters to be important in the future: Japanese, Chinese, French, Korean, Spanish, Bahasa Indonesian and German. The non-inclusion of Italian in the above lists, however, may be attributed more to the sampling used in those reports than to a realistic assessment of the actual situation, or of the potential. It may also be the case that there is a large presence of Italian and Italo-Australian companies in Australia, and those companies currently fulfil their own Italian language needs by using expert first generation speakers. (See also Chapter 8.) With the retirement of the ageing first generation, and the lack of fresh migration from Italy, the need for expert Italian speakers will become more apparent and more urgent.

The juxtaposition of regionalism and trade has encouraged the study of some Asian languages, as can be seen from the changes occurring in the language candidature in Year 12, and the new position of Japanese as the most widespread language in universities. Italian is not included in either of the lists above. Neither is Modern Greek. The two languages which have grown most in the last fifteen to twenty years in Australia are likely to be affected by the perception that they are not useful to learn, no matter what the truth beyond that perception may be.

The growth in the community languages in the 1960s happened against currents that marginalised the study of languages, and yet, now that languages are regaining status in the curriculum, the languages being set as priorities are those perceived as necessary for trade or tourism. In many cases these languages happen to be Asian, but the primary ground for their choice seems to be a judgement about commercial value. For instance Vietnamese is an Asian language, but does not appear to be targeted for significant growth anywhere in Australia. Ironically community languages, having contributed so much to maintaining language education high on the agenda, appear to be excluded from the benefits of the resurgent interest of education authorities in language education.

It would be unfortunate if the debate should take the shape of either a struggle for supremacy of one language over another, or a simplistic equation of Australian interests with its current major exports. The choice of defaulting on multiculturalism can, of course, be exercised as much as the choice of playing exclusively the languages-for-trade game. The twin dangers underlying this approach are that it may succeed in withdrawing incentives and students from some languages, and at the same time fail to attract new students from the 80% who do not know or study languages. In this case Australia will face a net loss in language resources despite its investment in implementation of new policies to boost language teaching. This same point will be argued from the standpoint of individual motivations in language learning in Chapter 5.

2.8.2 A Wider View of Economic Needs

It is a matter of concern that the trade and economic needs which are being put forward as an argument for promoting the study of particular languages may be being defined too narrowly, in that they restrict their focus to the biggest four or

five current commercial trading partners. This approach ignores two important areas: Firstly, Australia's internal and micro-economic needs are not taken into consideration, and secondly, it down plays the importance and potential of connections with smaller trading partners. This theme will be elaborated in relation to Italian in the final chapters.

2.8.3 Resources for Languages Other Than English (LOTE)

At the Commonwealth Government policy level there is a recognition of the need to move languages closer to the centre of the curriculum. This has taken the rather curious form, however, of rewarding Year 12 LOTE study with a $300 grant per student at that level. The grant does not, unfortunately, apply to every LOTE, but only to those eight priority languages identified by each of the States from a list of fourteen priority languages established by the White Paper (DEET 1991:16-17). If the intention is, as stated, to increase Year 12 LOTE study to 25% nationally, it is short sighted to insist that only a given pool of languages should be rewarded rather than any Year 12 LOTE. The number of students outside the nominated priorities would in any case be negligible and would cost little, but would carry at the same time a very important message to the Year 12 student: the nation appreciates the fact that you are studying a LOTE at this level.

Instead the message being given to anyone studying at a senior secondary level a language that is not among the (arguably arbitrarily) nominated ones, is that his or her chosen language is less appreciated (if at all). This policy will do little for the language ecology of the nation.

As far as Italian in particular is concerned it may be far too soon to discern what may be the effect of such an approach, although the early 1992 signs were anything but promising in Year 12, as has been shown. But this may be related more to the broad Green Paper/White Paper revanchist attitude towards Italian and other European languages, rather than the specific $300 policy.

The size of the 'reward' is in any case indicative of not uncommon parsimony when it comes to specific resource allocation for LOTE study. The White Paper allocations for 1990-94 (op. cit.: 25) for LOTE including Children's LOTE, Adult LOTE and Aboriginal literacy and language account for less than 10% of the total package for any year in the period. Thus when the policy laments the fact that 'language provision in schools is very uneven', and promises to check, in 1995, that 'an appropriate balance of provision' is achieved, one is left to wonder which resources the Commonwealth Government intends to use to increase the provision for those languages it deems insufficiently catered for in school. A possible interpretation of such cryptic allusions is that resources will be taken away from some languages and invested in others, which would be like robbing Peter to pay Paul. Hopefully DEET's intention is more charitable than this interpretation.

2.8.4 Ethnic Schools Policy Administrative Changes

Another important mechanism has been set in motion by the White Paper (DEET, 1991) which changes the administrative arrangements for Commonwealth funding of insertion classes and ethnic schools in general. These changes, which in day-schools will affect basically the primary level, were planned to take effect from 1992. Therefore it is too early to detect changes in the provision of Italian. However, judging by the reaction of some committees, the changes are far from welcome as they are feared to be a prelude to a fairly drastic reduction in funding of existing Italian programs, particularly in some States.

Moreover where the State government is not particularly sympathetic to the ethnic schools or the insertion classes or both, new and stringent conditions may be demanded from the ethnic school authority thereby making compliance with the new regulations difficult. These changes, together with the increasing realisation that programs with appropriate standards of teaching time and other support will need greater resources, are compelling community-based committees to ask for a voluntary levy from schools and parents. These are all pointers to a decrease in the primary school teaching of Italian, reversing the growth that was continuing in 1991.

3 CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT APPROACHES

In this chapter there is a description of the objectives and main types of Italian language programs found in primary, secondary and tertiary education, and the main issues facing the teaching of Italian at these levels.

3.1 Italian Programs in the Primary School

Australia has been an innovator on the international scene in the development of language programs in the primary school. First of all, Italian and other community languages gained mainstream education funding, leading to their establishment as a permanent part of the education system for children regardless of their background. Building on this initiative, Australia led the way in the development of second language programs at primary level. There were some models for bilingual programs (Canada) and for language maintenance (Sweden), but no other country has developed second language programs to the extent that Australia has done, especially in Italian.

3.1.1 Objectives

The objectives of the teaching of Italian (as for other languages) to children in Australian primary schools have been expressed similarly by the various education systems operating these programs. These policies often distinguish between the objectives for children of that language and not of that language background. Thus, for example, in the South Australia policy *Linking People Through Languages* the general goals of the LOTE program are stated as:

- the opportunity for students to maintain and develop their mother tongue
- the opportunity for all students to learn at least one language other than English R-7 (South Australia 1991:13).

Sometimes these specifically language objectives are accompanied by other objectives (e.g. learning or socio-cultural) which are also addressed to one of the two target groups. The NSW policy is one such example: in this policy, two other objectives of the programs for students of the particular language group are 'on-going conceptual development' and enhanced 'self-esteem'. By contrast, the children not of the language background are to be encouraged 'to communicate and interact with speakers of that language' (NSW 1988:32). Current policy documents tend to formulate their objectives rather in terms of operative targets, such as quantifying hours of teaching and establishing a time frame for policy implementation (NSW 1992b).

Other recent policy documents such as the Western Australia *LOTE Strategic Plan* spell out their rationale rather than their objectives, although there is typically considerable overlap including the recognition of different target groups. For example, the educational rationale of the WA *Plan* includes 'assisting students to understand their first language' and 'promoting conceptual development', while the cultural rationale includes 'learning about other cultures directly through language' (Western Australia 1991:3). The two other

elements of the WA rationale are vocational/economic (which presumably applies especially to the secondary school) and personal (including the development of self-esteem).

One of the objectives of primary language programs listed in the South Australian document *Linking People*, is a policy objective pure and simple rather than an educational objective. This is that the SA Department of Education aims to provide:

- reasonable spread and balance across the State of the following eight identified languages of wider teaching: Chinese (Modern Standard), French, German, Greek (Modern), Indonesian, Italian, Japanese and Spanish (South Australia 1991:13).

As has been described in other sections of this report, all other States and Territories have formulated similar policies, although with different selections from the original list of nine languages.

Despite being listed together in numerous statements of policy, there is tension, and potential conflict, between this 'priority languages' objective and the language maintenance objective. This is partly because priority languages encourage a second language approach (in curriculum and materials development as well as in school organisation and teaching) even if the language concerned is a community language (such as Italian). Conflict is also likely when it comes to the allocation of resources. For example, a State may redistribute resources away from community languages (where language maintenance is catered for) towards priority languages (as is happening in Victoria and South Australia). The promotion of priority languages may also cause a shift at the school level with schools replacing community language programs (such as Italian) with priority languages (such as Japanese).

3.1.2 Types of Programs

Terminology for describing types of Italian (and other LOTE) programs in primary schools varies considerably across States and systems.

In this section we will focus on what are, in our opinion, the two main types: second language and language maintenance programs. This typology is based on the target groups to which the programs are directed (i.e. children of or not of the language background). As we have already seen, this is fundamental to the objectives of the programs, an emphasis which is generally carried through to their organisation.

Although target groups are the fundamental feature of primary language programs, other features are also decisive in shaping programs. One such feature is also organisational, i.e. time allocation. This refers to whether there is a minimal (e.g. one hour per week) or substantial (e.g. four hours per week) amount of time allocated to the program. Another key feature is the curricular focus (i.e. whether the curriculum emphasises content or language). The importance of these features can be seen from the following descriptions of second language and language maintenance programs.

3.1.3 Second Language Programs

Second language programs are by far the most common type of Italian language program (chiefly as a result of the spread of insertion classes). As their name suggests, they are directed at students of non-Italian speaking background. Often, however, there are at least a few Italian background students in these programs, but they are not specifically catered for. There is, in fact, no specific catering for diverse language levels in second language programs because they are organised on the basis of the whole class. Their curriculum typically focuses on language and they provide one to two hours of instruction per week. These are often called a 'LOTE program for all', a 'community language program for all' or a 'language experience program'.

A small number of second language programs are bilingual programs (which are also known as 'partial bilingual' and 'immersion'). One Italian bilingual program of this type is found in Victoria and one in Western Australia. The students in these programs are either (apparently) of non-Italian background or there are both non-Italian and Italian in the same group. Bilingual programs are chiefly distinguished by their focus on content, whereby specified non-language areas of the curriculum (e.g. Science, Art) are taught only in Italian. The time allocation for bilingual programs tends to be more generous than the other program types, up to four hours per week.

3.1.4 Language Maintenance Programs

Language maintenance programs, though numerically smaller than second language programs, are nevertheless a sizeable minority. These are also known as 'community language maintenance', 'bilingual maintenance' and 'mother tongue development'.

These programs target students of Italian-speaking background who are specifically catered for, for example by separate classes. The curriculum combines a language focus with a content focus (the latter being to foster the children's conceptual development and language learning across the primary curriculum). Between two and two and a half hours per week is the norm for these classes.

Some programs targeting children from Italian backgrounds have been bilingual, for example in Adelaide during the 1970s. Bernardi comments, 'During the early 80s I was involved as a Research Assistant in an appraisal of the Bilingual System in two Adelaide metropolitan primary schools. The bilingual program was started in ten primary schools in the 70s and continued into the 80s. A number of people were sceptical about the benefits to children. It was thought by many that the children may be handicapped in their acquisition of English, therefore slowing down the process of learning. The appraisal demonstrated that learning two languages gave these children the ability to communicate in both without impeding intellectual and linguistic development' (personal communication).

As happened with other bilingual programs, the aims of some of the Italian bilingual programs emphasised the transition to English rather than the

maintenance of Italian. There is only one bilingual program for Italian background children in Australia at present. This is a 'bilingual support' program for infants children run by the NSW Catholic Education Office.

3.1.5 Organisation of Primary Italian Programs

Targeting

The basic form of organisation of the infants/primary school is the generalist teacher who takes his/her class for all subject areas for the whole of the school year. Owing to their different role in the school, Italian programs (like other language programs) are staffed by a specialist teacher — whether that teacher is a permanent supernumerary or a casual teacher employed by COASIT. That is, they teach Italian to a range of different classes in the infants and primary school.

As has been recognised by other specialist areas in the primary school such as ESL and Remedial Reading or Maths, specialist teaching may bring with it a certain degree of reorganisation of this generalist model when there are different target groups requiring programs which meet their specific needs. Some schools with Italian programs have implemented innovative specialist forms of organisation. One school in Sydney, for example, groups all children of Italian-background and non-Italian background in different groups where they are instructed at their appropriate level. The program for the children of Italian background is given a higher time allocation (and hence a priority) because of the importance of these children's Italian-language development for their overall success at school. This targeting according to language background and competency is also common in the programs of some other community languages in NSW.

For a variety of reasons, however, organising around the whole class (rather than particular target groups) has been a feature of the NSW Italian primary programs (as well as programs in some other LOTEs) since they started (Di Biase and Dyson, 1988:73-76). In other words, the Italian teacher takes a whole class at a time for its Italian lesson, whether or not the class contains different target groups (i.e. children of Italian and non-Italian background). This type of organisation, known as a mixed class/group, is also common in other States, especially since the spread of insertion classes.

Concerns have been expressed about the suitability of mixed classes as a form of organisation for language teaching (op. cit.: 82-83). It was felt, in particular, that the learning outcomes of the children of Italian background in mixed classes would be lower than could reasonably be expected.

In view of the question mark hanging over mixed classes, it is most timely that a study by Clyne et al. into second language learners in Victorian primary LOTE programs is investigating, among other things, 'the grouping in classes of children with and without a home background in the language' (1992:60). Although it is premature to draw any hasty conclusions since only the preliminary findings have been published, it is most interesting to note the

contrasting viewpoints on mixed classes in the discussion about the Italian and Chinese programs.

In keeping with the focus of the research, the section on the Italian programs analyses only from the second language learner's angle and makes an observation in favour of mixed classes: 'The community and the use of home background speakers as a model of the target language appears to enhance further the comprehensible input for the second language learners' (op. cit.: 69).

By contrast, the section on the Chinese programs, which took a broader look at the classroom, raises some concerns: 'The results of class observations suggest that a separate language program is required for native speakers: while children with and without Chinese backgrounds continue to be catered for in the same class, children with a home background in the language are likely to be distracting sources as the level of language is far from motivating and does not appear to challenge them' (op. cit.: 67-68).

As noted above, this study by Clyne et al. focuses on the children who do not have a background in the language being taught. Its preliminary findings suggest that mixed groups may be in the language learning interests of second language learners (although this result seems only to relate to listening and not to speaking or the other skills). Sadly, there are still no hard facts on the effect of mixed groups on students with a home background in the language, despite various critical observations on this subject (including, as we have seen, by the Chinese researcher on the Victorian project). There seems little doubt that this research needs to be done. Until such time, it seems wise to treat mixed groups with caution, not enthusiasm, and for teachers to experiment with targeted forms of organisation to see whether they facilitate better learning outcomes.

Time allocation

Some education systems (such as the NSW Department of School Education) set a minimum time allocation for their primary community language programs to help provide the conditions needed for language learning. In NSW the minimum is two hours.

But, as mentioned above, program type also has a considerable bearing on a program's time allocation. Bilingual programs tend to receive a more generous allocation (two to four hours per week) than language maintenance and second language programs (around two hours per week). Language experience programs, a second language program with very limited language learning objectives, have the smallest allocation (around thirty minutes to one hour per week). Many of the insertion classes provided this smallest amount of time.

COASIT and other community-based committees have been often criticised on account of the meagre time allocation of their insertion courses. This allocation may have been as low as thirty minutes per week. This writer has heard some Government school principals who had had insertion classes in their school commenting unfavourably in this regard. It appears that some higher level school authorities are concerned, particularly on this ground, about the spread of 'the insertion model' both horizontally (to new primary schools) and vertically (to secondary schools). It must be pointed out in this regard that most insertion classes are currently allocated more than thirty minutes per week.

However the criticism is unjustified on at least two grounds. The time constraint is due, in the first instance, to per capita funding. Indeed no school would be able to do more with $35 or even $40 per child per annum. In fact a medium to large primary school of, say 500 pupils, would barely attract half a teacher's salary. The second constraint is perhaps even harder to overcome. This is the resistance of many of the principals themselves, as well as many generalist teachers, to allow within the school's overall program and timetable a language program that would take more than half an hour per week. Attempts by community-based committees to increase time allocation for the Italian program have been regularly thwarted.

Indeed severe time constraints may be imposed, from within the school, even on government-run language programs such as in some of the community language programs in NSW which, from their inception in the early 1980s, had difficulties in meeting the two hour per week policy requirement.

Recent research and experimentation in Canada has questioned the effectiveness of the 'drip' approach to language teaching (in which language instruction is spread thinly over children's schooling) and has proposed the intensive model (Lightbown and Spade 1989). In this, the hours otherwise allocated throughout a child's primary (or secondary) schooling is collapsed into a shorter period (say three to six months) in which their class is instructed only in the target second language. Lightbown's research has found that the children's fluency in the language increases markedly during the intensive period (Lightbown, 1992). Australian education systems wanting to see better results (especially in the area of speaking skills) from the language dollar may be interested in the Canadian experience. If the Canadian model seems too extreme, perhaps it could be adapted to Australian conditions, for example by encouraging the teaching of certain subjects (e.g. Science, Art, Social Studies) in the target language in block periods. In this respect, it is interesting to note that in Clyne et al.'s research mentioned above it was found that a 'content-based program' was also shown to contribute to better results overall (op. cit.: 69).

3.1.6 The Community Language (CL) Program in NSW: Views from the Classroom[3]

Now that a decade has passed since the introduction in 1981 of the State Government funded CL programs in NSW primary schools, it is appropriate to stop and reflect upon what has been happening in the classroom during that period in this innovative area of education.

To foster this understanding it is important that CL teachers record their accumulated knowledge, practices, problems and outcomes in the classroom. This section will examine aspects of the Italian CL program at Kegworth primary school during the years 1987 to 1991.

In the past ten years there has been scant attention given to the programs. More locally based research studies are required on the programs to equip teachers

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with current theoretical and empirical knowledge on how children best acquire a second language and how the school system can better maintain and develop the bilingual resources of the children from community language backgrounds.

Furthermore, studies taking a closer look at the existing primary programs would assist policy-makers to recognise the value and contribution that CL programs in the primary schools can make in the development of quality language programs of the future.

Some facts and figures on the State funded programs
In 1991 there were 90 CL teacher positions distributed over seven departmental regions in NSW. These positions are reaching over 17,5000 students, more than 7,000 of whom have bilingual resources. For these children the programs are designed to develop aural, oral and literacy skills. The other 10,500 students participate in second language acquisition programs for zero beginners. Overall 11 different languages are being taught in the programs. The average ratio of teacher to students is one teacher to every 196 students.

Of the 90 CL positions 20 are occupied by Italian teachers who between them teach 4,379 students (622 NS). There is an average ratio of one teacher for every 220 students in the Italian programs.

3.1.7 The Italian CL Program at Kegworth Primary School

Background and history
Kegworth Primary is in the inner city suburb of Leichhardt, once described as the heart of Sydney's Italian quarter. (In the 1986 Census 22.6% of residents were of Italian background.) The school, including the pre-school, has about 210 pupils, 45% of whom are of non English speaking background (NESB). All pupils from kindergarten to Year 6 participate in the Italian CL program.

Kegworth was one of the first schools in the Sydney metropolitan area to experiment with the teaching of Italian at primary level (DSP program 1976).

In 1979-80 in response to requests from Italian speaking parents, community members and dedicated teachers, the first Italian program was set up with temporary Federal government funding distributed through the NSW MEP Committee. At the time over 80% of the school's population was of Italian background. This program opened the door for the introduction of a State government funded program in 1983, which after eight years continues to function as an integral part of the Kegworth school curriculum.

The Italian CL teacher funded under the NSW Government CL programs is a permanent full-time specialist teacher, appointed as additional to the normal number of staff at the school. This means that the teacher devotes all professional time to teaching Italian though, as a permanent staff member is also required to undertake some other duties, like weekly sport. Employed under the same conditions as the general primary staff the CL teacher has equal access to the decision making bodies, funding, resources and facilities in the school, all important issues for the development of a CL program. As is the case for

mainstream teachers the CL teacher has two hours release from face-to-face teaching each week.

Focus of the Kegworth program

Fundamental to the organisation of the Kegworth program is the belief that the primary purpose of the CL program is to assist the local Italian speaking community to maintain and develop its language. The program in the last five years has been organised in response to the language needs of the CLB children. It concentrates its instructional time on developing aural/oral skills and teaching literacy to the CLB children who are most likely to be able to use and pass on their language. The program is in accordance with the 1985 Guidelines for CL programs issued by the NSW Department of Education which states '... priority is to be given to native speakers in the program' (p. 13). There is a second language acquisition stream for the children who have never been exposed to Italian.

Program organisation

In the language maintenance stream the CLB children are divided for instructional purposes into four groups, formed across grades: Kindergarten; Grades 1 and 2; 3 and 4; 5 and 6. For the first three of these groups instruction time is two hours weekly, distributed into four half hour lessons, while for the fourth group there is an added half hour per week providing three by fifty minute weekly lessons.

The children of non-CLB are taught in six grade groups one being a composite grade of 5/6 students. Instruction time for these children is one hour per week divided into two half hour lessons. Students from all ten groups are withdrawn from mainstream classes for CL lessons which are conducted in a classroom set up as a permanent home for the Italian program.

The Language Maintenance program

When the Italian background children enter the program their parents are asked to complete a questionnaire which assists the teacher in assessing the bilingual state of the family and in developing a linguistic profile on each child. The survey elicits information concerning family history, language varieties used at home, frequency of use, by whom and with whom, modes of maintaining the language in the home, links with the country of origin and attitudes towards the presence of the Italian program in the school. As the children progress through the program their parents are asked from time to time to make appraisal comments on the program and on their children.

Bilingual resources of the CLB children

The children of Italian background are mostly children of parents who migrated to Australia from the 1960s onwards. The two most recently arrived families in the school community migrated during the last five years. The Kegworth families come from a diversity of regional backgrounds though the majority of parents and grandparents originated from Southern Italy. For a third of the children the language of the home is usually Italian and/or a regional or local dialect. The others tend to come from homes where there is a mixture of Italian, dialect and English spoken.

The children bring to the maintenance program an array of bilingual resources reflecting their particular speech community background. At one end of the

Italian is their third language. They too generally show good results in acquiring initial competence, as they are already familiar with distinguishing between two language systems and so transfer these skills to the learning of Italian.

Despite a learning environment where continuity and retention of language is difficult to achieve, the thrust of the SLA program at Kegworth has been the development of initial communicative competence for the purpose of communication within the immediate community. Experience has shown however that other than participating in several excursions into the local community each year, organised to enable the children to try out their knowledge of Italian with Italian speakers, the children not of Italian background have very limited opportunity to hear and use Italian in real situations outside the classroom.

In recent times at Kegworth, the expectations of all children acquiring initial competency in Italian in 280 hours, over seven years, has been put into question. It now seems more realistic to make the aim of the SLA program more a language and culture experience for all and recognise that initial communicative competence will only be achieved by a limited number of children.

What seems significant is that all participants not of Italian background enjoy access to cultural items about Italy during their annual 40 hours program. This will ensure that their experience with Italian is a memorable one even if elements of the language soon fade as a consequence of lack of practice in hearing and speaking the language. With cultural content being important, many aspects of Italian culture need to be presented in English to these children, further reducing time for acquiring aural/oral skills in the program.

Linguistic aims of the SLA program

The program aims to give all children an opportunity to become familiar with some Italian through a language and culture experience and to assist the children to develop initial communicative competence in Italian. Focusing on these linguistic aims will assist the children to develop an awareness of Italian in their local community and encourage them to communicate and interact with speakers of Italian while promoting an understanding of Australia as a multilingual, multicultural society.

In addition the program will give the children an opportunity to reflect on their first language and on different language systems and thus help them to become familiar with the process of second language acquisition in preparation for LOTE in high school.

The promotion of the CL program

The Italian program at Kegworth benefits from the interest, support and involvement of parents, staff and members of the wider community. Contributing to the popularity of the program is the fact that in Australia, Italian language and culture enjoys a high status. A unique feature of the program, which adds to the supportive environment of the school community, is the presence in the school of an Italian-born Principal who shows a great understanding and commitment to the program.

A CL program needs to be continually nurtured, not only by members of the school community, but also by the CL teacher whose daily workload must include the

promotion of the program throughout the school. At Kegworth the high profile of program is maintained, by integrating it into whole-school activities, which are planned co-operatively by all staff members.

Listed are some of the activities and ideas implemented at Kegworth Primary:

- School assemblies: Announcements presented in Italian by the children. Performances of songs, poems, stories, plays in Italian;
- Drama performances in the local community;
- Bi-lingual plays, traditional dances, etc., performed in local shopping centres, for local high school students and pensioners at an Italian leisure/learning centre;
- Book Week activities: Display of children's published stories in Italian, in library and favourite characters illustrated from Italian books;
- Home reading scheme in Italian;
- Awards: Merit certificates given in recognition of work well done in Italian;
- Education Week, Christmas and Easter activities;
- Lunchtime stories in the library: Read in Italian by senior students and parents;
- Excursions into the local Italian community;
- School news bulletin: Publishes stories and interviews in Italian;
- Correspondence to parents: From P and C or the school, translated into Italian;
- Kindergarten orientation day: Talk to parents - introductory talk on the Italian program;
- Parent coffee morning meetings: Talk on the benefits of the CL program;
- Parent information evenings: Guest speakers talk on how parents can assist in language maintenance;
- Staff meetings : Agenda - the CL program;
- Multicultural days: Joint school and community celebrations devoted to Italian language and culture;
- Public relations in the local community : Articles and photos featuring aspects of CL program in local print media;
- Maths Fun Day activity: Bingo in Italian nos. 1 - 100;
- School canteen: Items for sale written in Italian;
- Correspondence with penfriends: Corresponding with primary school students in Florence, Rome and various schools in Sicily.

3.1.8 Western Australia: Italian Partial Immersion Program: An Alternative Approach in Second Language Teaching[4]

In 1991, a new approach was introduced into teaching LOTEs in Western Australia, involving the teaching of Italian through the normal classroom curriculum. The two schools involved, East Wanneroo Primary School and Spearwood Primary School, began this program in 1992.

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Programs have been developed based on the experiences gained in Victorian schools and on research into language studies in many countries, including that of Professor Michael Clyne, Professor of Linguistics at Monash University.

The history of the East Wanneroo program

Italian lessons began at East Wanneroo Primary School through the Italo-Australia Welfare and Cultural Centre with lessons conducted after school. Later, classes were moved to school hours with children from Years 4 to 7 being given the option of taking Italian. In 1986, it was decided to make Italian compulsory for Years 2 to 5 and optional for Years 6 and 7 with the intention that the Year 5 group would move through the school. By 1988, Years 2 to 7 were learning Italian in all classes and in 1989, Year 1 students were admitted into the program.

As a result, by 1989 all students from Years 1 to 7 were learning Italian in school hours. This has remained school policy with only Year 3 students being excluded from the Italo/Australian program in 1991, as they receive instruction from the Italian immersion program for four hours each week.

The idea of introducing the immersion program began at East Wanneroo Primary School in May 1990, when the Principal and a representative from the school council attended a seminar at the Ministry for Education on bilingual education. There they were addressed by Darryl Mullins, Principal of Bayswater South Primary School in Victoria, where a successful German partial immersion program had been in operation for the previous nine years. A month later applications were called for Principals wishing to initiate a partial immersion program in 1991. Approval for the program was obtained from the staff, the Parents and Citizens Association and the School Council. The application was made, and was successful. A teacher for the program was appointed at the beginning of the year.

The role of the classroom teacher

Classroom teachers have a vital role in the success of the program. At East Wanneroo Primary School, a meeting was organised between the Principal, Year 3 teachers and the immersion teacher to discuss such matters as timetables, recommended subject areas, how to deal with questions parent would ask, and clarifying their respective roles. Another factor discussed was how to help children move from the monolingual classroom into the bilingual one. The classroom teachers were responsible for making children aware of what to expect and to reassure them and prepare them for what would be for most a very unusual situation. Prior to the commencement of classes, the children were told that they would be having the immersion teacher for certain subjects and that these subjects would be conducted solely in Italian. They were told that although the teacher did not speak English, she did understand what was being said to her. They were also instructed to ask if they were not sure about things.

The parents

Once the co-operating teachers had decided how they wanted the program to run, parents were brought in so that they too could be informed. About 40 parents attended the meeting, which had two main aims: first, to answer questions from parents, and second, to elect a committee for the immersion program.

The committee, made up of the three Year 3 teachers, the Principal, the immersion teacher and six parents, is an integral part of the program and members take part in monthly discussions. Together they have developed aims and objectives and have offered alternatives or suggestions when problems have occurred. The input from parents is invaluable, not only for the committee, but also because they are part of the community and are able to hear what is being said and felt by other parents. They can either reassure them or report back to the committee or the immersion teacher so that any parents can have further contact if required. The idea is not to work in opposition but together, as it is very important for the community to have positive feelings about the program.

The pupils

It was decided that if the program were to be a success, the children in this immersion program would be exposed to nothing but Italian during the school day by the immersion teacher. The children were most concerned at first about the teacher's lack of English and asked if it would not be easier to teach her rather than have the lessons in Italian!

When the children came to their first lesson, they found it quite strange and were unusually subdued. This soon changed for the majority of the children. Initially, they would listen to the instructions and then ask 'Do you mean you want us to..?' Later the children were able to translate most of the sentence themselves; following instructions has become less of a guessing game.

Children in these classes have to concentrate to keep up with the lesson content or instructions. They need to listen carefully, watch closely and interpret what is being said, in other words to learn to think for themselves. The majority of these children have learnt to adapt to the requirements of these classes and are progressing at their normal class level.

Children have reacted differently to the program. Feedback received from parents, class teachers and the children, indicates that some started the year with trepidation because they did not enjoy Italian in Years 1 and 2 or because they were unsure of what to expect or did not feel comfortable with this change. However most children have come to realise that this program really is not very different from their normal classroom work. The children whose confidence has increased remarkably are not necessarily the children who perform well academically. After two terms, the children are just starting to give responses voluntarily in Italian.

The role of the immersion teacher

The immersion teacher has the role of linking the program and must work towards convincing sceptical people of its merits. This cannot be done by arguing the point but rather by demonstration.

At East Wanneroo Primary School this has occurred by conducting parent classes in Italian. Parents of children in Year 3 were given the opportunity at the beginning of the year to learn a little about Italy, its language, its people and their way of life. They were also learning that learning a second language is not as threatening as they had thought, and that they could go home and use the language quite easily. This proved to be a valuable public relations exercise.

In February the school joined forces to celebrate *Carnivale*, an Italian festival aiming to bring the school together. Staff and children worked hard to make it a truly authentic Italian festival. The school was set up as a huge market with displays and produce for sale. Children invited parents, relatives and neighbours to sample the wares and to see what was happening at the school. The outcome was very positive with the staff and also parents looking forward to the next year's celebration.

Curriculum
The immersion program teaches Italian using the primary curriculum. Therefore care needs to be taken when selecting subject areas. After a great deal of discussion between the classroom teachers and the immersion teacher art, literature, mathematics (space strand), music and health education were recommended. At present, there is a lack of resources for this program, so the group chooses areas that lend themselves to being taught in a second language and to the development of resources. The control and direction of those subjects rests entirely with the immersion teacher, so communication between the classroom teacher and the immersion teacher is important.

The lessons are broken up through the week, with each child receiving four hours of Italian classes per week, run according to the same format as other classes. The children work through their worksheets or conduct their discussions or play their games as they feel comfortable. There is no pressure to answer or complete work in Italian - the child must make the transition to Italian when he or she is ready. The idea is to build an environment where the children feel comfortable and confident.

Monitoring and evaluation
In 1992 the program at East Wanneroo Primary School was monitored by Professor Kindor of the University of Western Australia. He arranged for students to report on how the program was set up, and began the process of its evaluation. These studies are continuing.

The future of the immersion program
In 1992, East Wanneroo Primary School, was to extend the program to cover Year 3 and 4 children. In addition it is hoped that the whole school will take part in the immersion program by modifying the program run by the teachers supplied by the Italo-Australia Welfare Centre. Here the teachers will look at teaching a subject area through Italian rather than teaching Italian as a subject.

3.1.9 Curriculum for Primary Italian

Curriculum and materials
Italian curriculum and teaching materials (as for other LOTEs) have been largely the responsibility of the individual teacher. Commercially available materials have been supplemented by the products of the teacher's imagination. To this have been added the curriculum and/or materials produced by education systems and the organisations running insertion classes.

The curriculum for the teaching of Italian in the secondary school has changed considerably since Italian was first introduced in the late 1960s. This predominantly school-based approach to curriculum development has a number of short-comings. Despite the best intentions of the teachers, this material tends to lack appropriate grading of language and cultural content and sufficient variety to meet the needs of differing levels of competence.

This issue is being addressed to some extent. In Victoria, for example, primary teachers of Italian already have or will soon have access to centrally-produced materials covering the entire primary school: the *Arcobaleno* materials from Preparatory (the first year of schooling) to Grade 2, and the soon-to-be released *In Compagnia* materials from the Department of School Education from Grade 3 to Year 7 (the first year of secondary school). NSW is developing a generic framework for all LOTEs within the ALL Guidelines which is scheduled for implementation in 1994. While this framework will provide the teachers with some guidelines for grading purposes, it still fails to provide the teachers with a variety of materials to use at the specified grade levels.

Given that curriculum development is a timely and costly business, requiring considerable expertise, a national approach (as is generally being encouraged in curriculum development) to primary LOTE curriculum development has many advantages. Perhaps the Victorian materials could be adopted as a resource for Italian primary programs across Australia for use and adaptation at State and school level.

The language of instruction

Central to any discussion of language curricula is the question of whether the teachers use the target language or English as the language of instruction. (See also the section on secondary syllabuses below.)

Clyne et al. investigated this issue in their study of Victorian second language programs. Referring to the importance of teachers' expectations they comment, 'Pessimistic expectations often result in the use of English as the language of instruction. This produces a lower amount of exposure to the target language, and therefore the input is reduced' (ibid.: 73).

In the Italian programs they found that 'The consistent use of the second language ... by the teacher enhances the children's acquisition of the LOTE. This factor combined with encouragement from the teacher for the children to speak the LOTE further enhances this' (ibid.: 69).

Hence, this research sees the use of Italian as the language of instruction as a crucial factor in successful language learning

A report on one of the Italian immersion programs, East Wanneroo Primary School in WA, outlines how 'All instruction is conducted in the Italian language, with the teacher ... addressing the students, staff and parents in the classroom and playground, only in Italian. As a result, the teacher forces the students to listen intently in order to comprehend the instructions and directions given'.

Schools and systems may wish to adopt the use of Italian as the language of instruction, as this school has done, in order to raise learning outcomes. But, without doubt, the use of the LOTE as the language of instruction raises the

related issues of professional development (e.g. the provision of opportunities for the teachers to improve and refresh their Italian) and the assessment of the Italian competence of teachers prior to their employment as Italian language teachers, both of which need to be addressed by schools and systems.

Formal recognition of language achievement
It is worthwhile mentioning here a positive instance of the *co-operation* that can exist between committees conducting insertion classes such as the Italian School Committee at Bundilla and Department of Education regional authorities. At Bundilla, the study children do in the Italian insertion program is fully evaluated and recognised in the individual record card of the pupil released officially by the school (rather than by the community committee). Such recognition lends status and legitimacy to the subject by placing it on the same footing as other school subjects. Co-operation of this kind exists elsewhere but should be extended nationally also to the work children and teachers do in the after-hours classes.

Continuity from primary to secondary
Students are emerging from the primary school with, for example, 160 hours (one hour per week over four years) or even 560 hours (two hours per week over seven years) of instruction in Italian (and some of these students already have a knowledge of Italian from their background). This sound basis in the language needs to be followed-up in the secondary school, but continuity from primary to secondary is far from being assured.

Also, the junior secondary syllabuses in the States surveyed (NSW, Victoria and Tasmania) were developed for students beginning Italian at Year 7. These are hardly suitable for students who have already studied Italian for some hundreds of hours and have acquired a considerable competence in Italian.

3.2 Secondary Syllabuses and Assessment

There has been no concerted attempt to provide for different needs of secondary students taking Italian. Discriminatory procedures were set up in the past (Clyne, 1982:118-120) to scale down the language examination achievement of native speakers of a community language as against non-native speakers on account of the perceived language advantage of the former.

On the other hand the need to provide for an altogether different examination for native speakers of Japanese and Indonesian has been accepted at least in some States. The possibility of having at least different syllabus strands as well as different examinations should be considered also for languages such as Italian. It would of course be difficult to classify neatly 'native' and 'non-native' speakers where in fact for a number of reasons it would be more appropriate to speak of 'Community Language Background' (CLB and non-CLB) (Di Biase and Dyson 1988:3-4). Whichever the terminology employed, the reality is that the specific needs of second and third generation Italians have been ignored, by and large, both in the primary school where the insertion class model has been dominant and in the secondary school where the syllabus design, in most States ignores the presence of Italian background students.

An added reason for creating differentiated syllabuses arises from the spread of Italian in the primary school thanks to the insertion class coupled with the stated intention in most policy statements to provide continuity. The secondary school must now take into account the students' range of competences in Italian coming from either family background or from school experiences or both. To ignore this is to exclude Italian from the range of subjects that may interest those same students who would think they 'have already done it' since the syllabus does not attempt to develop further their competences and knowledge. This indeed may be part of the explanation as to why the greatly increased presence of Italian in the primary school during the 1980s has not produced a significant increase in the number of Year 12 students in Italian.

As has been the case for all other languages, the methodology for the teaching of Italian has shifted from grammar and translation to that of the communicative approach. This approach, which began to gain popularity in the late 1970s, has gone through a number of changes in emphasis, a process which continues to this day. The predominant approach has been functional and, to a lesser extent, functional-notional. In such a syllabus, the content is guided by the functions and notions or themes to be taught.

The syllabuses in NSW (Years 7 to 10), Victoria (VCE, i.e. Years 11 to 12) and Tasmania (Years 7 to 10 and 11 to 12) are examples of the functional approach (NSW Board of Secondary Education 1989; Victorian Curriculum Assessment Board, *Language Other Than English: Italian: Study Design*, 1991; Tasmania, Schools Board 1991a and 1991b). The extent to which these syllabuses are purely functional (or functional-notional) varies. In some cases (e.g. the Victorian and Tasmanian syllabuses) language forms (such as syntax and morphology/grammar) are listed separately and would seem to play an important, though not the determinant, role in the course. Of the three States examined in detail for this survey, only the NSW 2 Unit/3 Unit syllabus makes no mention of functions, prescribing instead the relevant language study as 'sounds, grammar, syntax, vocabulary' (NSW op. cit.).

These syllabuses and/or their forms of assessment, which will be described below, are also typically organised around the four skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. The Victorian 'study design' for the VCE differs from the others in this respect. Three new categories, speaking to inform, focusing on performance and reorganising information, have been added to the more familiar fourth category, writing.

In addition to language content, these syllabuses tend to prescribe and describe certain topics or themes through which situations of language use may be created in the classroom. In the NSW (Years 7 to 10) and Tasmanian syllabuses, these topics tend to focus on the immediate interests and context of the students, e.g. Self, Eating and Drinking, and Holidays. Despite the narrow focus of these topics, they are intended to be the vehicle for the presentation of aspects of Italian culture. This objective is more consistently applied in the NSW Years 7 to 10 syllabus than its Tasmanian counterpart.

One strand of the NSW 2 Unit/3 Unit syllabus takes a different and more traditional approach to the question of content. The students can choose among a number of prescribed texts, some of which are the songs of contemporary song writers.

This vital area of cultural content is approached in a more comprehensive manner by the Victorian VCE document (op. cit.). The language is presented through a range of topics which are relevant to an Italian or Italo-Australian perspective, e.g. migration, modern Italian history and business. Although in this approach a range of discourse forms is studied, including literary works, the list of discourse forms given in the VCE document appears to be rather undemanding and could be extended. There is room in this approach for studying novels in depth, writing business correspondence, and other more advanced activities.

A number of additional points need to be made about the Victorian document, not least because it has been inspired by the ALL Guidelines which are having a significant influence on curriculum development in the LOTE area. The Victorian VCE document (op. cit.) shares a common framework with the documents for all other LOTEs taught in Victoria, with a number of inserts on the language and cultural content specific to Italian. In the common framework there is quite detailed methodological guidance, such as discourse forms (e.g. *fotoromanzi*, announcements, letters, songs) and activities, settings and roles through which these discourse forms and language study and use can be given a realistic context.

Secondary syllabuses typically move from a presumed beginner level and work up. Some syllabuses do try to cater for differing levels of competence in Italian by offering post-beginner courses of varying degrees of difficulty. In Tasmania, for example, two levels of syllabuses are offered for all stages except Stage 1 (beginning level) in order to cater for different rates of progress and levels of outcome. In NSW, however, only the senior grades (Years 11 and 12) have a choice: 2Z for beginners and 2 Unit/3 Unit for students who have reached School Certificate (Year 10) standard. In Victoria, students do not have a choice of course: there is one for Years 7 to 10 and one for Years 11 to 12, although they may be taught at varying levels of difficulty. The junior course presumes no knowledge of Italian, while the senior course assumes three to four hundred contact hours, i.e. completion of the junior course or equivalent.

Junior secondary syllabuses which start from scratch must be questioned as to their suitability for students with prior knowledge of Italian gained from their Italian-speaking background or their study of Italian in primary school. Students from an Italian-speaking background may legitimately wish to study Italian in secondary school, but would find a beginner course quite unsuitable. It appears that junior secondary syllabuses tend not to fulfil these students' aspiration to achieve a more advanced mastery of Italian. The same could be said of students from a non-Italian background who have studied Italian in primary school. It is a matter of great concern that so little has been done to develop syllabuses which foster high levels of fluency in Italian from Year 7.

If these syllabuses are examined from the point of view of students who are beginning their study of Italian at secondary school, further deficiencies are detected. Research into the second language acquisition of Italian indicates that the level of language competence expected of these students is quite unrealistic, particularly in their productive use of Italian (i.e. speaking and writing). If these syllabuses do indeed wish to develop students' speaking and listening skills above all others, then a curriculum approach based on second language acquisition research would need to be developed.

To sum up these comments on the linguistic approach of these syllabuses, it appears that the varying language learning needs and levels of the students of Italian have generally not been sufficiently taken into consideration. The result has been syllabuses that tend to flatten the student body, treating as homogenous what is a heterogeneous group. Such an approach must have the effect of lowering the final linguistic outcomes of the students, especially those with a knowledge and use of Italian prior to starting secondary school.

3.2.1 The Cultural Neutralisation of the Syllabus

Topics and areas of study in the secondary syllabus are often built around the fiction of the ideal tourist going to Italy and engaging in small conversation about hobbies, travelling, holidays and the like. At the most engaging end of the spectrum, there are topics relating to the environment, study, work, the family, relationships with others, and so on. The latter are just as appropriate to general studies as they are to a language and culture subject. The assumption is that language is culture neutral and can be learned in a historical and synchronic vacuum. We need to examine what may be missing from a language study that follows a generic framework made to fit any culture.

It is legitimate to ask what the student of Italian will know about present day Italy or any element of Italy's past by the end of their senior school studies in Italian. To what concepts have the students been exposed regarding Italy's economic and productive system, consumption patterns, tastes, values, socio-political systems and so on? Although individual teachers may draw on content from these areas, they do not seem to have found a slot in official syllabuses. Language study which does include culturally specific content would bring the instrumental motivations for learning the language into sharper focus, and would provide indispensable background knowledge for engaging in any sort of future commercial or otherwise activities involving Italy. At the same time the pursuit of that knowledge would satisfy the more affective or integrative motivations, because the students would gain significant knowledge of the country whose language they are learning. Instead the student is often presented with hypothetical encounters in bars and restaurants with hypothetical friends who are interested in small talk or generic topics.

A more recent approach (in syllabus design as in textbooks) has emphasised the use of authentic text, e.g. items from Italian magazines including advertisements of commercial products and services, recipes, menus, train timetables and similar items exemplifying the current use of Italian. This approach has become extremely popular and does manage to introduce elements of culture into the language classroom. However, authentic materials often present problems relating to high specificity (and level of difficulty) of vocabulary and structure. It does not, moreover, solve the problem of presenting to students of Italian a coherent picture of Italy past and present.

3.2.2 Secondary School Assessment

From Years 7 to 10 a student's achievement in Italian is assessed at the school level. The NSW and Tasmanian syllabuses provide tasks, criteria and assessment examples to guide the teachers. From this information, it can be seen that assessment is structured almost entirely around the four skills, listening, speaking, reading and writing, although the Tasmanian syllabus follows the traditional approach of treating cultural awareness as an additional assessment category. It is interesting to note that reading aloud is assessed as an aspect of speaking skills, assessing pronunciation and intonation.

Approaches to the assessment of LOTEs at the senior secondary level are changing fast. One vehicle of change is the National Assessment Framework for Languages at Senior Secondary Level (NAFLaSSL n.d.), through which national syllabuses and accompanying assessment tasks are being developed for selected languages. Italian is not one of these languages. However, the VCE document *LOTE: Italian: Study design* (op. cit.) has a quite different approach to assessment from NSW and Tasmania which, it would seem, has been created in response to new perceptions of Italian/LOTE curriculum and assessment flowing from the ALL Guidelines. (See Glossary.)

Another important difference between Victoria and its bordering States is that it plans to replace its final external examination with a combination of 50% externally-assessed Common Assessment Tasks and 50% school-based assessment. In NSW students are also assessed at the school level in Years 11 and 12 but these school assessments do not replace any part of the external examination. They are simply regarded as additional information on the candidates, should it be necessary.

The NSW and Tasmanian assessment tasks for their respective Year 12 certificates, as shown in their syllabuses and/or examinations, have much in common with those in their junior years. They are structured around the four skills, which are separately assessed, as is cultural awareness in Tasmania. The forms of assessment for the different levels of syllabus (as described above) are, in fact, almost identical. They mainly vary in the level of vocabulary required (e.g. NSW Unit 2 versus Unit 3) or, to a lesser extent, the knowledge of language structures (NSW Unit 2Z versus Unit 2). Only the Unit 2/3 examination diverges from this emphasis on the four skills by also assessing knowledge of a literary work, a typical inclusion in traditional language examinations.

Despite a decade (at least) of the communicative approach to language teaching, in which language is supposedly taught and learnt by use, it is most surprising to find English used widely in the NSW and Tasmanian assessment tasks and examinations. This is true across all four skill areas in both Year 7 to 10 and Year 11 to 12 assessment tasks:

- Listening: Questions testing aural comprehension are often in English (Tasmania);
- Speaking: English may be used to establish the situation (NSW and Tasmania);
- Reading: Questions are in English and students are instructed to answer or write a summary in English (Tasmania and NSW);

- Writing: The topic may be set in English (Tasmania) or students may be asked to translate from English into Italian (NSW).

Some productive use of Italian (in speaking and writing tasks) and some receptive use is assessed (in listening and reading tasks). But the extensive use of English as a test medium indicates that students are being assessed on their ability to translate in both directions, as much perhaps as on their ability to understand or produce Italian. Yet skill in translation is nowhere stated as one of the objectives of the syllabuses.

There may be a number of rationales for the extensive use of English, such as to help isolate the skill being assessed; to assist the students to cope with the level of Italian being used. Whatever the reason, it does not require a great effort of imagination to see that such an extensive use of English in assessment would have a profound effect on the language of instruction used to teach the syllabus and, hence, on outcomes. One could safely predict that English would very frequently be used as the language of instruction, even where the students could easily cope with Italian.

Assessment of the Victorian VCE course is through four Common Assessment Tasks (CATs) which assess the use of Italian in the following four areas: reporting, conversation and discussion, discourse creation, and discourse comprehension and reorganisation. As is suggested by the titles of the CATs, the approach to the assessment of languages generally, and Italian in particular, differs from that presently followed by NSW and Tasmania.

In the VCE course there are clearly stated work requirements in the four newly-elaborated skills areas. These new skills areas focus on the productive skills of speaking (speaking to inform and focusing on performance) and writing (writing and reorganising information). The receptive skills are integrated into the assessment rather than being separately assessed.

This approach makes the use of Italian the natural medium for the assessment tasks and should encourage the use of Italian as the language of instruction, a logical consequence of a course which emphasises the use of the language.

Another interesting innovation in the Victorian approach is that the assessment tasks are typically well contextualised, for example in the fourth CAT students are presented with a variety of information in Italian to which they must respond by writing in Italian. At the time of writing this use of context in the presentation of tasks is typically absent in the NSW and Tasmanian approach.

The mastery of grammar is generally subsumed under the assessment of the four skills and is generally not assessed separately, except in Tasmania where a grammatical knowledge test is one of the types of written assessment. This general lack of emphasis on use and knowledge of grammar is consistent with the communicative approach. One wonders what incentive, or even space in the curriculum, there is for teachers to teach the language structures that are specified in the syllabus, if knowledge of these structures is not given some credit in the assessment.

Some serious consideration needs to be given to how language structures can best be taught. Research into second language acquisition would indicate that there is a

considerable gap between the language level expected in the examinations (e.g. those of the NSW HSC) and the students' actual productive capacities in Italian. This indicates that the syllabus may not be suited to developing the productive skills of the students. This would seem to be borne out by the comments of the NSW HSC examiners who reserve their strongest disappointment for the candidates of the Unit 3 examination where the gap is probably the greatest (NSW Board of Studies 1991:17-19). Future syllabus design and assessment should take into account findings and insights from the area of second language acquisition (cf. Pienemann et al. 1988).

Another issue in the assessment of languages generally, including Italian, is the extent to which students are able to prepare themselves for assessment. This is particularly an issue where assessment is through external examination and where the syllabus and assessment is predominantly structured around the four skills. Perhaps the introduction of a broad range of examinable topics (e.g. trade and commerce, Italian history, literature, the Italian community in Australia, etc.) may be one way of enabling students to prepare themselves (in terms of language and cultural knowledge) in a range of areas. Improved language outcomes would result from this content- and comprehension- rich approach.

Of particular significance in the coming years for senior secondary assessment will be the greater co-ordination and standardisation of curriculum and assessment across States, as is occurring at the time of writing through the implementation of the ALL Guidelines (op. cit.) and NAFLaSSL (op. cit.).

By contrast with this movement towards standardisation, there are the existing marked differences between the States in the methods of assessment of school students (Years 11 and 12) at the end of secondary school, or rather of 'Australia's eight different school systems ... [which] remain hopelessly out of sync with each other' (Lewis, 1991:15). This is paralleled by the intricacies of university entry requirements, although these may become more uniform following the establishment of the unified national system at tertiary level.

Calls for a similarly unified national system in the secondary schools, at least as far as Year 12 is concerned, are becoming more insistent, and often come from employers who regard a standard measurement as more reliable. In launching a recent policy document of the National Industry Education Forum in Melbourne, business representative Brian Loton (quoted by Carolyn Jones in *The Australian* 4/8/1992:3) insisted that 'We need ... a framework of national standards against which the performance of our young people can be measured and we must link these standards to international standards'.

The NSW Board of Studies is also proposing to change the rules of the Higher School Certificate in response to the last five or so years' 'considerable debate about university students' proficiency in English ... and the need to ensure that HSC candidates choose a greater variety of subjects covering both humanities and sciences' (Totaro, 1992). In fact the HSC currently favours mathematics and sciences, which offer 4 Unit studies, while no subject from the humanities area offers such a high level of specialisation. The proposed changes would, among other things, make English the only mandatory subject for Tertiary Entry Rank (TER).

Whether or not one may agree with increasing standardisation, international comparisons and scrutiny are becoming unavoidable in the global village. As far as languages are concerned, Australia may find itself in meagre company internationally. Hardly any countries allow exit from the secondary school without at least two or three years' study of a second language.

An increasingly harmonised secondary education system could have direct and positive consequences for language learning, especially for the small candidature languages, but one must be sure that standardisation is occurring on a firm and well-researched basis, rather than on fads of the moment, or on intuition.

- The Secondary Syllabus should take into account and respond to the diverse competencies and needs of students of Italian. It should also include central Italian and Italo-Australian culture and society issues, parallel with other subjects, such as mathematics and science;
- Examinations should also offer a range of levels as well as reflect different competences;
- Teachers of Italian need to contribute nationally to establish broad parameters for the above.

3.2.3 The Status of Languages in Secondary Schools in Adelaide[5]

From information gained by attending meetings, reading articles and reports, as well as seeing what goes on in secondary schools in Adelaide, I feel that greater emphasis is put on Mathematics and Science. Students are encouraged to take these subjects before giving languages any thought. Languages are not given the same status. For instance in a school I know, in 1992 French and Italian have been reduced from four to three lessons per week in Years 8 to 10. In Year 10, two of the three classes have a double lesson on a Monday and one single on a Friday. This is a disastrous situation because students only have direct contact with the language twice per week.

Apart from the above problems, throughout the State and the primary and secondary sector, there is a stronger push for Asian languages (Chinese and Japanese). Statistics in a newspaper article show the high numbers of student taking these at Year 12. This leads the general public to think that this is where the new direction must be, but the reality is that a great number of these are paying students from overseas (Asia) studying in South Australia (see article from *The Adelaide Advertiser* reproduced below, and the reply from the SSABSA).

While there should be no bias against Asian languages, I strongly believe that they should be offered in schools as well as and not instead of European languages.

In the school where I teach, the study of French and Italian at the school is compulsory, the retention rate to Year 12 is probably higher than some other schools. Amongst the students are many of non Italian background. For example in Year 12 this year I have:

[5] by Kathy Bernardi, Secondary School Teacher of Italian, South Australia

6 students who are non background speakers;
2 students who have 1 parent of Italian background;
8 students who have 2 parents of Italian background.
(Most of these parents are second generation whose knowledge of Italian is limited.)

It seems that the number of students with one parent or one grandparent of Italian background is increasing not only in our school but other schools and the number of non background students is very steady. Also increasing is the number of students whose parents are of Italian background but are second or third generation and very little Italian is spoken at home except with grandparents or great aunts and uncles. With this in mind I would like to see recommendations made that Italian be given greater emphasis as a second foreign language. I do not, however, deny that the community language status is important.

With reference to dialects many parents I have come into contact with, will apologise for the fact that the small amount of Italian known by their children is dialect. They seem to feel that it is of no value and lacks status. In every case I emphasise that the dialect is of value - it is part of the regional culture, but standard Italian must be learnt and treated as another language. Because they recognise á number of words in their first year of secondary school, some students lack commitment when learning and remembering new words, therefore by their second or third year they slip back and find it difficult to keep up with the demands of new vocabulary and general language structure.

The Green Paper, did put a dampener on the enthusiasm of teachers of Italian. The fact that $300.00 was to be paid to high schools for those students who are taking a language to Year 12 was generally accepted as a token for efforts being made. In South Australia it was decided that the State system would administer this money from a central fund, while the Catholic schools would handle their own funds. For the teachers working in the Catholic sector, this was a surprise. In my opinion, however, the bonus points for entry to university (as suggested previously) would have been a far better way to motivate and enthuse students to keep up the study of a language to Year 12. They are the ones to be motivated. One spin off perhaps, is the fact that the school principals may give languages some priority in the schools and probably avoid the problems of timetabling as I mention below.

It may be of interest to note that the Syllabus Advisory Committee of SSABSA (Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia) of which I am a member, has produced Stage 1 of an accelerated syllabus course for Italian. It was produced with the intention of allowing students who had not done any Italian in Secondary School or had done it for one year only, to pick the language up in Years 11 and 12, the last two year of secondary school. This will be adopted by some schools in 1993. Criteria for entry into the course has still to be finalised.

Finally I would like to add that if any money is made available by the Italian Government, it should be used to promote Italian language and culture to everybody, whether of Italian background or not.

The following article appeared in the *Adelaide Advertiser* on 11 June 1992.

Japanese Catching Up In Popularity

German has topped the language list among Year 12 students for the second year, but Japanese is catching up fast.

Although the long time favourite was again the favoured language, with 426 Year 12 students in 1992, a new breed of bilingual students is opting to learn languages used closer to home.

Japanese, modern standard Chinese and Indonesian were the big movers with Japanese showing the biggest increase since last year.

The number of Year 12 students studying Japanese rose from 133 to 189, while Chinese went from 291 students last year to 318 this year.

Indonesia attracted an extra 24 students, taking the total to 120.

The enrolment figures, released by the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia, show Italian was the big language loser this year, dropping from 328 students to 291.

Board director Dr Gary Willmot said: 'I think we will see growth in the next few years in Asian languages, where there is particular interest in trade and economic ties.'

Top Languages	
German	426
French	381
Modern Chinese	318*
Italian	291
Japanese	189*
Modern Greek	184
Vietnamese	183
Indonesian	120

*overseas paying students

A reply to the above article

Madeleine Jenkins, Curriculum Officer, Languages, at the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia (SSABSA) wrote the following letter, dated 26 June 1992, to the Editor of *Adelaide Advertiser*:

Dear Sir,

A number of teachers of Italian have approached me requesting that I inform you of their concerns regarding the article, 'Japanese Catching up in Popularity', which appeared in *The Advertiser* on 11 June 1992. These concerns can be summarised as follows:

1. The description of Italian as the 'big language loser', based on a comparison between enrolments in 1991 and 1992, fails to acknowledge the big rise in enrolments in Italian last year (from 263 in 1990 to 328 in 1991). Indeed a comparison based over two years yields the following results:
   Italian has gained approximately 28 enrolments
   Modern Greek has 'lost' 29
   French has gained 25.
2. The gain/loss terminology used in the article tends to give the impression that one language's gain is another's loss.
3. The paragraph in question is closely followed by a quotation from the Director. The juxtaposition of these two paragraphs might lead the reader to assume that 'interest in trade and economic ties' is a significant factor in relation to Asian Languages only.

I am happy to lend my support to these teachers, since, as I am sure you are aware, simple comparisons based on figures gathered over a limited period of time, nearly always run the danger of being unrepresentative of a more complete, and therefore more complex picture.

Further, given that we have yet to reach the enviable position of many of our competitors, in whose countries the study of Languages other than English is accepted and esteemed, I feel it is understandable that any potentially negative reference to a language or languages is greeted with much concern.

At the same time, may I assure you that the opportunities provided by the *Advertiser* both recently and in the past, to publicise Languages other than English are indeed appreciated, and I look forward to continued fruitful associations in the future.
Therefore I would be grateful if you could inform me as to the feasibility of the above concerns being taken into account in any future articles of a similar nature.

3.2.4 Italian in Tasmania: School Courses[6]

In Tasmania, although there is an official syllabus for Italian in the primary school, we do have one or two excellent primary program where teachers have obviously devised their own program and resources.

Apart from Saturday morning community classes there are no Italian teaching programs particularly directed to students of Italian background. In both the Government and Independent school systems in Tasmania all learners of Italian generally undertake the same program or course regardless of whether they are of Italian background or have prior learning.

The learning of Italian in Tasmania formally starts at high school level (if at all). The new TCE is divided into four stages. The first stage covers roughly Years 7 and 8 and is a common program. After stage 1, all other stages have neighbouring syllabuses which make the difference between oral/aural emphasis (a less demanding syllabus) and equal skills (the most common syllabus which leads to a pre-tertiary Year 12). Chronologically, they roughly correspond to (i) Stage 2 - Year 9, (ii) Stage 3 - Year 10 and (iii) Stage 4 - Year 11/12. However, students usually only complete up until Stage 2 by Grade 10 due to time-tabling and in-house concerns. A student is not bound by chronological concerns and may actually complete and sit for Stage 4 in any grade if she/he is good enough.

Years 11 and 12 Italian Program
Due to the lack of Italian in Tasmanian high schools and the fact that many students arrive at senior secondary level having only completed stage 2, nearly all Italian students formally commence their study of Italian in Years 11 and 12. These students have two possible pathways to follow:

The first option is to complete all four stages in one year of study. A stage requires 150 hours of study, so effectively the student is completing 600 hours of study in 150. Many students do this and perform exceptionally well. In fact, if they obtain an OA award at Tasmanian Certificate of Education stage 4, they are admitted automatically to second year University.

The second option is to complete an accelerated stages 1, 2 and 3 course in Year 11 and then progress to stage 4 in Year 12. At present few students take up this option as it limits the number of subjects they may study at pre-tertiary level.

6 by Shane Parker, Secondary School Teacher of Italian, Tasmania

This pathway is far more attractive to adult night time students (probably the biggest growth area in Tasmania).

All Italian syllabuses after stage 1 have neighbouring syllabuses which are referred to as the oral/aural emphasis syllabuses. They are designed to be less demanding and do not require the rigorous external assessment of the pre-tertiary stage 4 program. The syllabus working committee has also created advanced A units (of 50 hours) in all languages for students who have completed stage 4 in Year 11 and who wish to maintain their language in Year 12.

The senior secondary students of Italian divide neatly into two groups - (i) a small group of full-time day students and (ii) a larger group of part-time night students (mainly adults). Both groups are highly motivated and motivating. The success of the program is due to the nature of the syllabuses and the choice of accompanying texts and resource packages. The Italian Committee's aim was to produce a study plan which emphasised Italian as a living language.

Great importance was given to oral mastery and teachers largely opted for a one text approach (although some teachers are using other recommended texts). The text *Prego* (Lazzarino 1988) was chosen because it covers most grammatical functions, possesses a wonderful resource package and stresses oral fluency. The majority of teachers aim to do as much as they can in class in Italian. At our college I take the approach of introducing grammar explanations quickly in English and then later explaining the point in Italian. In this way, students are using the language as a vehicle aimed at understanding the workings of the language and not just as a role-play mechanism. It encourages students to think about the language in the language. They find it hard at first but later prefer it to other methods. With time, there is no need to use English for grammar explanations at all! Naturally there are problems with this approach (e.g. students must be roughly of the same ability level) but these problems can be largely overcome. As to a national curriculum — by all means let's try! However, all States would need to work in collaboration in order to provide a realistic syllabus appropriate to all learners of the language. It would also need to consider various pathways as well as exit and entrance levels.

3.3 Curriculum Approaches and Areas of Study in Tertiary Institutions

In much of the tertiary sector, particularly the older universities, the teaching of Italian as a foreign language remains the main policy focus as it has been from the inception of Italian in Australian universities. Italian is the language of a major strand of the Western world's cultural heritage, and is studied to gain access to it. There is a particular emphasis in university courses on the arts and writings of the 13th to the 16th centuries, with a secondary focus on the 19th century and the earlier parts of the 20th century.

The acquisition of specialised language and cultural skills is seen as part of the general liberal education of the highly educated in Western society. In universities where the study of Italian is seen in this context, students who may be Australians of Italian background, and/or Australians of any background

aspiring to work professionally with the Italian community, find that the onus is on them to apply their studies to the Australian setting as best they can. If a high level of linguistic competence has been achieved through their liberal studies, *this is not an impossibility*.

This traditional model tends to distance the Italian language from the Italian community and the Italian language spoken in Australia. In the late 80s and early 90s a climate of hostility towards European and community languages has been generated as part of the legitimate promotion of Asian languages. By distancing themselves from the Italian community, the universities have not developed what could be a strong source of support for Italian language teaching.

We neglect our communities at very great cost. It is an insult to treat Italian as if it were not connected with the community (Transcript 31:11-13). An exclusive focus on community needs would, of course, be unnecessarily narrow. There are important differences of opinion among Italianists about what should be taught. In the more established universities, as Carsaniga (1991:171) maintains, 'all the most important areas of Italian literary culture are well represented ... [as well as] Italo-Australian literature'. UNE, for instance, offers specialist units on the language and culture of the Italo-Australian community. It is not this valuable content that should be challenged, but rather the lack of extension into vocational or professional areas and the lack of response to scientific, technical and economic uses of the language. The exceptions which provide courses in vocational areas are few, and include the BA in Translation and Interpreting at the University of Western Sydney, Macarthur.

In her work for the *Review of Teaching of Modern Languages in Higher Education*, Bettoni (1992:58) found that 'After analysing the questionnaires, reading departmental statements and visiting the universities my impression is that in general, discounting the obvious language teaching objectives, departments of Italian, old and new, mainly pursue academic objectives and strongly reject any vocational intrusion. They also fear the intrusion of (language) programs servicing other departments with the possible exception of Music or Fine Arts'.

Bettoni's comment points to the need for universities to develop courses and programs that interface with vocational and professional courses. There have been some brave attempts to diversify the curricula offered at undergraduate level, but without in-depth specialist studies. Disciplinary approaches (e.g. history, linguistics, politics, where the content materials would mainly be in Italian) would not find favour among the students whose preferences are rather generic and divided between literature, cinema, history, linguistics and so on. This could mean that students of Italian may not have acquired in the course of their undergraduate studies, with the possible exception of literary criticism, 'the necessary theoretical and methodological instruments offered by a specific discipline to be able to write a dignified MA or PhD thesis' (Bettoni, ibid.).

Since language requirements for entrance were dropped from all universities in the 1960s, one of the most difficult problems for the teaching of Italian, as with other languages, is that the university has to provide courses from beginner level and is expected to produce in barely three years graduates who are able to speak and write the language very well, as well as being conversant with much of

Italy's literary history and culture in its widest sense. Such expectations are unrealistic.

It is almost impossible for those who begin to learn the language at university to learn enough language within the time and conditions of an undergraduate award to enable them to process subject matter in and through the language at the required university level. Yet there have been no attempts to accelerate learning by experimenting with, for instance, intensive courses strategically positioned between semesters. On the positive side, the fact that the university is providing an introductory course in a particular language means that at least there is what may be the only and last chance for a young person to approach the study of a LOTE before joining the workforce. Indeed this is where there has been a spectacular level of interest in Italian among non-Italian speaking background students, even if is often short lived. A more rational approach would be to have every student introduced to some consistent period of LOTE learning during their secondary school.

In order to cater for the variety and the level of students' interests, many Italian departments (or divisions within broader languages departments) have devised, apart from language courses, a wide variety of content-based courses. This could be illustrated by reference to the range of courses offered by any of the larger departments of Italian or several of the smaller ones taken together. Table 3.1, which presents the courses at the University of Wollongong, illustrates the broad range of Italian studies available. Imaginative and creative courses are indeed found in many Italian departments, but only two examples will be cited here: La Trobe's *Women in 20th-century Italy*, and the BA (Education Primary) in Italian at Edith Cowan University in Western Australia. The latter type of course is rare, which is unfortunate in light of the extensive teaching of Italian in primary schools.

Language (and professionally oriented) studies	Culture and society	Literary studies
• Introductory Italian • Italian Language (all undergraduate levels)	• Introduction to Modern Italy • The Civilisation of the Italian Renaissance	• Dante's *Inferno* • Dante's *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso*
• Italian-Australian Studies: Italians in Australia • Language and society		• Alessandro Manzoni
• Language for Musicians • Interpreting and Translating Italian	• Literature and Society in Modern Italy • The Italian Lyric Tradition • The Italian Renaissance • Venice and the Theatre of Carlo Goldoni • Drama in Music: Italian Opera • The Novel and Society in 20th C Italy	
Italian Honours		

Table 3.1
Range of Courses in Italian at University of Wollongong 1991
Source of data: NLLIA Language and Technology Centre Database, University of Queensland

The broad range of content on offer when compared with staffing reveals another point of weakness which Italian as a university course shares with other languages. At the University of Wollongong for instance, along with Italian, the Languages department offered in 1991 French, German, Japanese and Spanish. Yet the full-time equivalent (FTE) staff was 9.0 which means in practice either that individual staff members need to cover a large number of diverse course areas, or it means a high ratio of casual staff, or both.

There is a long and well established tradition of publishing in Italian in Australia, with obvious strengths in the development of approaches to language teaching. One illustration of this is the range of materials which have been developed at the University of Sydney, and which have been picked up by publishers overseas. Marmini, Totaro, Zanardi, Vicentini and others have had material published by both English-based and Italian-based publishers.

There is a natural demand for Italian stemming from lovers of the humanities, as well as from the Italian community, who have strong affective reasons for studying the language. There is thus a strong base from which to develop the next qualitative shift to bring Italian studies into the next century in Australia. This means pursuing two aims. On the one hand, there is the need to develop the interface of Italian studies with scientific, technological, financial and professional areas. On the other hand, Italian studies need to develop stronger post-graduate studies and research, beginning precisely from the subject areas most closely related to the learning and teaching of the language.

Among the least expensive and probably most effective options to meet the demand would be the establishment of a language oriented, vigorous and long term student exchange program with a variety of countries. Apart from making languages a more valued and desirable component of university education, such a program would have the effect of rapidly improving language competence and resources. American universities are expanding in-country presence in Europe. This allows their students to achieve efficiently a high level of competence in the language and at the same time is a kind of marketing investment.

In-country experiences are often a compulsory component of tertiary and professional language studies in Europe. Such experiences are currently being expanded throughout the European Community with special support programs for students.

Given the demand for Italian in schools, particularly in the primary, Italian departments in universities could profitably take a much stronger interest in schools, link up with, support or generally 'adopt' language teaching programs, particularly experimental programs where the research interest of students may flourish and benefit both the school and the university (e.g. Western Australia). Similarly university departments could join forces with other subject areas within linguistics, education and language pedagogy.

3.4 Teaching and Learning Materials

A wide variety of course materials has become available in Australia for the learning of Italian at primary and secondary as well as tertiary levels. To help teachers of Italian choose wisely among the many available textbooks produced in Australia, Italy, the USA and the United Kingdom, the Canberra CIAC has published a useful, well documented guide (Bocchino 1992). Most of the material, particularly for the primary school and early secondary, is designed and produced in Australia. Indeed the very first attempts to produce curriculum and course materials for introducing a whole range of languages in the primary school were probably carried out in Australia.

This work followed the realisation in the 1960s and 1970s that there were hardly any materials suitable for teaching languages in the primary school in the Australian context. Languages had been altogether absent from primary school until then, although many primary school age children with a community language background were receiving instruction in their community language through after-hours schools run by their communities.

3.4.1 Italian Materials

Materials used in the Italian after-hours schools in the 1970s and 1980s were, by and large, the same books that may have been used (or were no longer used) in the Italian primary school. Such materials would have served some purpose in teaching recently arrived children, who may have been familiar with the language found in those books and the methodology employed to teach from them. They were not suitable, however, as textbooks in the Australian context, especially with children who did not have an experience of the Italian primary school. Not until the mid 1980s did Italy start producing materials suitable for teaching Italian in a range of situations abroad. The widely distributed *Parliamo l'italiano* by Silvana Perini, for instance, was published in 1984 and was still, in many ways, too 'Italian' for direct use in the Australian classroom, whether for language maintenance or second language learning.

This has been superseded by a new generation of texts produced in Italy, such as the excellent *Tra noi* kit originally developed for ISB children in Germany, but very useful for language maintenance programs anywhere. For the second language classroom the series *Viva l'italiano* (Chiuchiù et al. 1988), which is now accompanied by an excellent video cassette, is particularly helpful.

3.4.2 Australian Materials

In the second half of the 1970s, with the recognition of community languages, and in the 1980s, with the spectacular growth of Italian teaching in primary and at the other levels, a wide range of materials for Italian teaching and learning were produced, both with government assistance and on a purely commercial basis. Many of these are very high quality, wholly Australian productions, such as the kit *Pane e Fantasia*, one of the earliest efforts to produce, with government assistance, a comprehensive, well-resourced, modern, activity-based course for the Australian primary school. It was 'enthusiastically received by teachers in the various states' (Bocchino 1992:27).

Like the above kit, many of the 1980s Australia-based texts for teaching Italian from the primary and junior secondary through to the upper secondary, university and adult education level, are competitive in the international market, e.g. Katis, Piccioli and Savoca (1983), Guarnuccio and Sedunary (1986a and 1986b), Totaro and Marmini (1987), Vicentini and Zanardi (1987), to mention just a few. Much of this considerable output of Australian products has been published either by international publishers with an Australian branch, or by Italian publishers. This ensures a certain amount of international exposure and sales beyond the Australian market.

The continuing interest of international and Italian publishers testifies to the quality of the materials generated within the lively Australian Italian teaching and learning context. The latest example of this is the new and promising Victorian materials project for the teaching of Italian in upper primary and junior secondary schools *In compagnia*, funded by AACLAME and among the first to apply consistently and creatively the ALL Guidelines (Scarino et al. 1988).

This kind of material could easily be adopted in other States as well as outside Australia. It is to be hoped that this interest is encouraged to flourish and express itself in joint Australian-Italian publishing ventures in spite of devilishly complex copyright issues.

3.4.3 Community-developed Materials

There is indeed a need for a flexible co-ordinated curriculum based on the Australian experience. Some of the community-based committees have developed materials for the teaching of Italian not only in their own programs, but for wider use. The Sunshine Coast Italian School Committee, for example, with its remarkable history of professional development for its teachers, has been engaged for a number of years in the creation and publication of materials for a full primary school Italian syllabus specifically designed for Queensland school conditions. They have also produced an amusing video-kit commemorating the five hundredth anniversary of Columbus's voyage to the Americas. Other committees such as COASIT have made financial contributions to publications of teaching materials. as well as books to disseminate knowledge of the Italian community (e.g. Ware 1982). COASIT also publishes and disseminates materials through newsletters such as *La Voce dei Piccoli* . Others such as FILEF, who do not run extensive programs of their own, have nevertheless published numerous original items for the teaching of Italian as a community language, as well as education-related articles, newsletters and books.

3.4.4 Issues and Areas of Need

Among the issues that need to be resolved are those of copyright, particularly wherever Australian teachers try to adapt Italian materials to local requirements, or audio-record text for classroom use. On the other hand there are problems when an Italian publisher may be interested in publishing products developed in Australian but government assistance had been involved. These issues may be dealt with in the context of the bilateral cultural agreement between Australia and Italy.

Another broad issue which surely is of concern, not only for the study of Italian, is the availability of language texts in students' homes. The practice adopted by many Australian primary and secondary schools is that textbooks, if used at all, are to be kept within the school. The students (or the parents) do not acquire the text directly, and the book often does not come into the home. This is not conducive to students consulting their books except strictly in school hours.

Another effect of this policy is that newer materials may not be used until the old texts have fallen apart, by which time the 'new' text may no longer be up-to-date. This in turn adversely affects the book market and book authors. A direct grant to students (or parents) for the purchase of textbooks should be explored and attempted.

The audio-visual area is one where teaching materials for Italian are still in short supply. Audio-visual materials are needed for (primary and junior secondary) classroom use, especially ones that accompany well-designed courses. There could be, for example, supporting dialogues on video, portraying aspects of Italian culture and life.

Another area not covered adequately is that of cultural content. There is a need to present modern or historical Italy in an accessible language for secondary students. One of the reasons often cited in syllabus committees for not including cultural content (or what used to be called 'civilisation') in the Italian syllabus, is that there are no adequate materials. This is still largely true for the secondary school. An attempt by the former didactic director attached to the Italian Consulate in Sydney to fill this gap produced a good quality and colourful bilingual publication *Italia d'oggi/Today's Italy* (Italian Consulate 1989), based on Italian Government publications. The content is very useful, but unfortunately the Italian language is often inaccessible even to intermediate-advanced students.

There is little teaching material concerning the Italian community in Australia, the contribution of Italian migrants, structure, function, nature and culture of the various Italian-Australian communities. Another shortage of materials for language teaching in Italian, of concern mainly in the tertiary sector, but also at the upper secondary school level, is in the area of special purpose texts, such as for commerce, business correspondence, tourism.

3.4.5 Available Course Materials

This brief survey and assessment is limited to some of the most widely used texts for teaching Italian which have been produced in Australia. Two exceptions are *Tra noi*, an interesting recent addition from Italy, which addresses particularly the teaching of Italian to primary school children of Italian background, and *Cara Matilda*, an example of the Australian-Italian collaboration referred to above. A fuller description and evaluation (in Italian) of some of these and most of the other commonly used texts will be found in Bocchino (1992).

Pane e Fantasia
Origins: Produced by the Education Department of South Australia (South Australia 1982).
Target groups: This is not clear. Since some knowledge of Italian is assumed, it tends to be more appropriate for children of Italian-background than non-Italian background. Grades: not specified.
Resources: Complex and high quality kit including teachers' manual and readers for the students, accompanied by worksheets, audio and video cassettes, workbooks, slides and overheads.

Approach: Units constructed around language games. Readers are extended by worksheets.
Evaluation: Some of the worksheets use large chunks of Italian which have not been introduced in the accompanying reader. There is some focus on language structures, but there is no follow-up in language exercises which give practice in the structure.

Arcobaleno
Origins: Produced in Victoria by the Catholic Education Office (1986).
Target groups: Intended for the infant grades (Kindergarten/Reception-2). Intended for both Italian background and non-Italian background children, with some suggestions of extension activities for the former group.
Resources: Storybooks, *giornalino*, audio-cassette, teachers' manual.
Approach: Storybooks are extended by a *giornalino* which includes rhymes, songs, games and some language practice with a predominantly oral approach.
Evaluation: Extensively used by teachers of young children because of its lively, activity-based approach and oral emphasis.

Avanti
Origins: Australian-produced textbook by Melbourne-based CIS Educational (Guarnuccio and Sedunary 1986a).
Target groups: Intended for students of non-Italian background in the junior secondary. It is used both at this level and in the upper primary (Grades 5 and 6).
Resources: Textbook.
Approach: Dialogues, featuring designed characters, present the language of each section, which is practised in a number of exercises including written and listening ones.
Evaluation: *Avanti* is popular with learners of non-Italian background. They like the characters, the humour, the dialogues and the continuity provided by the use of the same characters, more grown up, in *Sempre Avanti*. Some of the most useful aspects of *Avanti* are the dialogues (especially good for teaching speaking skills), and the listening exercises.

Sempre Avanti
Origins: Australian-produced textbook by the same group as *Avanti* (Guarnuccio and Sedunary 1986b).
Target groups: Secondary students of non-Italian background in Years 8 and 9 (suitable also for Year 10).
Resources: Textbook and audio cassettes (also broadcast by ABC Radio), including listening and speaking exercises.
Evaluation: *Sempre Avanti* is a very popular text for junior secondary in Australia, and uses essentially the same characters, high artwork and lay-out quality, teenager outlook and approach (learning Italian is fun) as the first book of the series. It includes micro-texts of current Italian (e.g. advertising) and cultural elements as well as quick grammar summaries.

Tra Noi
Origins: Produced in Italy by the *Italian Encyclopaedia* (1988) *IEI*, Rome.
Target groups: Children of Italian background living outside Italy.
Grades: Upper primary/lower secondary.
Resources: Readers, workbooks, teachers' books, games, audiotape and videotape and other materials.

Approach: Learning of the language is based on the learning of the culture. Each chapter of the reader commences with a dialogue featuring characters. Language structures presented in the dialogue are practised in oral and workbook exercises.
Evaluation: It is a comprehensive and sequential course. The videos are cultural in emphasis.

Andiamo in Italia
Origins: Produced in Queensland by the Italian School Committee, Bundilla (Gooch 1987-1992).
Target groups: Children attending insertion classes organised by the Italian School Committee, Queensland.
Resources: Textbooks (Levels 1-5) with accompanying workbooks.
Approach: The textbooks present lesson plans, including objectives, resources, language to be used, strategies and supplementary material. The program aims to meet the requirements of the Queensland Education Department's new Social Studies syllabus. Supplementary material, including worksheets for the children, are presented in the workbooks.
Evaluation: This is a thorough introduction to Italian which is interesting and varied in its presentation. A possible weakness is the amount expected from a half hour lesson. More time would seem to be needed to cover the planned work.

Primary materials, FILEF
Origins: Produced by FILEF, Sydney with the financial assistance of the Multicultural Education Co-ordinating Committee (MECC), NSW. (See Comitato Scuola/Italian Education Committee 1982a/b; 1983a/b; 1984a; 1985d; 1986b.)
Target groups: Primary level. Some of the materials are accessible to children of non-Italian background, e.g. *Italia puzzle* (Guaraldi, C. and B. Di Biase 1982a, Vol. 1 for Years K-3 and 1982b, Vol. 2 for Years 4-7), while others are directed at children of Italian background (e.g. *Garibaldi*).
Resources: A variety of supplementary material including: *Italia Puzzle* (Years K-3 and Years 4-7); *Garibaldi ; Note Storiche - Garibaldi; Che Gelato!* A newsletter for teachers, *Linguascuola*, used to be produced.
Approach: The wide range of material aims to teach Italian through activity, by acquisition of knowledge about Italy and its culture, and by using the Italian community as a resource.
Evaluation: Not a comprehensive course, but valuable supplementary material. Lively and unusual in the importance it places on the learning of new and culturally relevant content. Its community orientation is refreshing.

Prego
Origins: A. Lazzarinoarino, 1988, New York, Random House.
Target group: Post-secondary students.
Resources: Accompanying package.
Approach: Covers most grammatical functions, stresses oral fluency.

La Voce dei Piccoli
Origins: Prepared by COASIT, NSW (periodical).
Target groups: Children in COASIT insertion classes.
Resources: Supplementary materials for teachers, in the form of information and worksheets for the children.
Approach: A variety of interesting material.
Evaluation: Useful extra material for teachers.

Cara Matilda
Origins: Produced in Italy by Marietti Scuola (Brunod, Œfalà, Bocchino 1993).
Target group: For beginners aged 5-7 learning Italian as a foreign language.
Resources: The kit is made up of a teachers' book, Matilda puppet, game cards, story illustrations, cassette, unit maps and a workbook for the pupils.
Approach: The language in this first part is entirely oral. The material is designed for group work and so is suitable for teaching Italian in various school situations. The choice of language has been made according to frequency, usefulness and ease of learning, and the situations are those most central to the needs and interests of a 5-7 year old. All the elements are introduced gradually, and the sequence is not linear but cyclical in accordance not only with learning and language processes, but also with children's psycho-cognitive development.
Evaluation: The course is comprehensive and presents good material and ideas to meet language content and cross-curricula aims. It will be appreciated by teachers for its practicability and language accuracy.

3.5 New Directions

3.5.1 Competency and Languages

The competency debate which is pervading the whole of the education system, not just in Australia, was overdue. Without attempting here to enter debate on the merits of contentions such as that of Fay Gale (*The Australian* 12 August 1992:22) that 'the competency goals are not based on real knowledge of future needs', it must be pointed out that the main reports on the matter have failed so far to take into account the future linguistic needs of Australia in LOTEs. In a world which increasingly relies on rapid communication within and across countries for a myriad of trade, education, information and cultural exchanges, it is short sighted to think that competency in languages should not play a role. The debate needs to be informed by a perspective that acknowledges the languages and communication competencies already in the community, and addresses the issue of how to enhance them. For instance, the second generations of community language speakers will often have a linguistic potential which could be enriched by the acquisition of formal skills in their background language.

Such formal skills need to be provided through schooling in that language. On a broader scale, however, it is important to look at what is included in the definition of competencies, particularly in the areas of languages, communication and culture. There should be serious consideration of the benefits that would accrue from including the specific needs, aspirations and values of the speakers of minority languages. Otherwise there is a risk that the legitimate needs of the majority for literacy in English may influence the debate to the point where the English language needs of the minorities might be ignored or overshadowed. In other words smaller groups may be thought to generate smaller needs. At the same time the needs of speakers of minority languages for literacy in those languages may be overlooked, to make way for the development of competencies in whatever LOTEs are nominated by the dominant group to meet their perception of economic needs.

3.5.2 LOTE National Statement and Profile

There is currently an attempt to produce a national framework for a LOTEs K-12 curriculum, with involvement from Ministries and Departments of Education from all States and education systems. The National Steering Committee for LOTE issued in June 1992 a *National Statement and Profile for LOTEs*. The development of the national framework will take into account a whole number of documents such as *The Common and Agreed National Goals for Schooling in Australia; The Mayer Committee: Employment-Related Key Competencies; The Australian Language Levels (ALL) Guidelines*, as well as a number of 'social justice' documents, such as *National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia; Gender Equity in Curriculum Reform Project;* and The *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy*. The group was expected to produce guidelines in 1993.

While the attempt to give a national dimension to curriculum and methodology in language teaching, and to make the most of the valuable experiences that have occurred at local and State levels, is a positive move there are nevertheless a number of reasons for disquiet among the teaching profession. Among these is the apparent predominance of bureaucratic representation both in terms of the make-up of the participants, and in terms of the documents to be taken into account, which appear to be imbalanced towards a socio-cultural agenda rather than a linguistic or a pedagogic one. In the words of one teacher-educator (Zemiro 1993) the *National Statement* basically uses categories such as 'intellectual, cultural, social, economic, employment (which) are extrinsic, not intrinsic, to LOTE learning and lack any attempt at definition in terms of the acquisition of LOTE skills. This is most unhelpful to syllabus writers and classroom practitioners (and) fails to generate believable profiles or outcomes.' Another criticism is that LOTE program types do not include maintenance and development programs for background speakers.

An effort should be made to provide a linguistic as well as a socio-cultural framework to achieve a successful implementation of the program. This framework should be based on current linguistic research, e.g. in bilingualism and second language acquisition, and would therefore use linguists in the design phase. The accumulated experiences in language teaching in most States, should be taken into account, particularly by calling on successful language teachers to participate as well.

This framework is presumed to be applicable to all languages, but each language in fact will present its own special problems and characteristics. It would therefore be desirable to plan for national language specific consultative and advisory bodies and mechanisms.

4 TEACHER EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL ISSUES

Among the issues to be considered are:

- the number of teachers including teachers of after-hours and insertion classes; the perceived under supply of teachers;
- qualifications, language background and experience of existing teachers;
- working pattern and career prospects;
- training and professional development needs.

Research for this chapter has included:

- information collected from education authorities through the NLLIA;
- the findings of a survey of the professional development needs of language teachers conducted by NLLIA/LARC among NSW primary and secondary teachers across systems between November 1990 and 1991 (Di Biase in press);
- responses to a questionnaire and interviews conducted among community-based Italian School Committees.

4.1 Italian Language Teachers

It is appropriate to pay tribute to teachers of Italian. The sheer quantity of the Italian teaching activities in Australia would be out of the question without the professional dedication and even sacrifice of the teachers. By comparison with any other school subject area the teacher/student ratio for Italian classes is most unfavourable to the teacher, and consequently to the learner as well. For example, the estimated ratio for NSW across school systems and levels (excluding universities) is 214.5 students to one teacher of Italian. This is admittedly a rough measurement and does not reflect the situation in many schools. In secondary schools, for instance, the ratio for Italian is by and large comparable with that of other subjects. Nevertheless the rough measurement highlights the critical condition in many primary Italian classrooms. Few acknowledge that Italian language classroom teachers, especially those working in the non-system or insertion classroom, have a very difficult job with very little structural support. Many teachers have to commute between schools.

> [Italian teachers] are running programs for anything between 200-500 students a week. They don't get enough time for preparation. ... In schools they are treated the same as teachers with 20/30 students. Classroom teachers are less involved and therefore less committed to the language class which therefore has less status for the kids (Transcript, 36:4).

It is difficult to see how Italian programs can survive, let alone prosper when Italian teachers and classrooms are subject to these pressures. In fact, as Bernardi (personal communication) points out,

> There are strong indications that primary teachers who teach Italian find the work very stressful and a number of competent teachers have opted to return to 'normal' classroom teaching or are thinking about it. The reason being that the lessons are of the duration of 30 minutes, perhaps only twice per week. One group is followed by another group and at the end of the day

the faces of children are a blur. At times these teachers work in two schools.

It is not easy to calculate what the total number of teachers of Italian may be, particularly in the primary schools since the line between insertion, casual and part-time is never sharp. Many teachers also serve across systems and/or ethnic schools, Saturday Secondary School and so on.

One issue of concern is the incredibly high proportion of teachers of Italian employed on a part-time basis. The questionnaires returned by the community School Committees report, for example, that one committee employs only five full-time teachers as against 200 part-time. This reveals the precarious nature of the Italian teaching situation despite the apparent success of high student numbers enrolled in Italian classes in the primary school. The teacher may well be more vulnerable now in the wake of the drastic changes in administrative arrangements of the old Ethnic Schools Program funds that made it possible for those Committees to employ language teachers.

4.1.1 Teacher Supply and Accreditation

It is difficult to determine exactly what the qualifications or accreditation status of teachers of Italian are. For language teachers in general, conditions for accreditation or registration change from one State to the next. The largest contingent of language teachers is in Victoria, the State with the largest language teaching operation in Australia. LOTE teachers in Victoria, reported as such by Government schools, number 1,016 in the post primary area and 336 teachers in primary schools, 200 of whom hold LOTE accreditation. According to Hannan (1991) the non-LOTE accredited primary and secondary teachers may be native speakers, or have completed accredited or non-accredited courses, have done university subjects as minor or major studies in the language, or have studied a LOTE teaching method.

Hannan (ibid.) does not specify whether those 336 primary teachers include insertion class teachers. Neither is it clear whether these teachers are regularly employed, full-time or part-time. However it does reinforce the point made above about the high pupils/teacher ratio in the primary sector. At the same time there appears to be a surplus of almost 400 post primary teachers in Victoria with LOTE qualifications, who are not currently teaching LOTE (ibid.). This is not unlike the situation reported for NSW, where there are about 350 qualified language teachers currently teaching in other departments (Boston, 1992).

This apparent over-supply of qualified language teachers is contradicted by the fact that hardly any universities train primary language teachers. 'It must be stated that tertiary education programs are not sufficient to satisfy the demand for community language teachers, especially in primary schools ...' (Clyne, 1991:124).

The size of the Italian language teaching operation in Australia bears little relation to the number of Italian language teachers trained or in training. For instance in NSW despite the fact that by 1985 the number of primary pupils studying Italian had grown to well over 30,000, in the early 1990s there are still

no language teachers being trained for the primary school and only a handful are in training to teach Italian in secondary school. This means that, particularly at the primary level, teachers must rely heavily on their personal initiative and resources in both linguistic or methodological terms. Apart from some in-servicing initiatives for teachers already in the field, in NSW there appear to be no plans to embark on the necessary formal training, with the exception of the Australian Catholic University (ACU). Having introduced Italian recently, the ACU has opened its language courses to Diploma of Education students and, as from 1993, to its Bachelor of Education (primary) students and is also planning further teacher education initiatives (see Piccioli in press).

In Victoria, the State with the largest proportion of students of Italian at most levels, the situation is more satisfactory. There were in fact 29 potential graduating students in primary teacher education and 23 in secondary education in 1988 (Lo Bianco 1989:56-57 and 84-85). These 52 potential graduands were to replenish human resources in more than 400 schools teaching Italian in the State.

	Primary	Secondary	Total
Students	84,544	43,507	128,051
Schools	256	151	407
Teachers*	249	305	554
Graduating students in teacher education	29	23	52

Table 4.1
Teacher supply potential and number of schools teaching Italian in Victoria in 1988
** Number of teachers in Catholic schools was not available. An estimate was made based on school : teacher ratio in other systems*
Table constructed from data in Lo Bianco (1989)

As Italian is at present a typical undergraduate subject there is little hope, in the short term, of improving the quality of teacher education. University departments of Italian will need to give urgent attention to the questions emerging in the Italian postgraduate area: What are the needs of practising Italian teachers and other professionals? Who will re-train them or offer further studies? Who will train the trainers?

For a comprehensive analysis of the complex range of issues pertaining to language teachers' education, professional development, and questions of supply and demand, the reader is referred to the report by Nicholas et al. (1993).

There is at present very little pressure for recognition of the qualifications of overseas trained teachers of Italian, primarily because there are few if any teachers among the decreased number of new immigrants to Australia from Italy. This does not mean that the problem of recognition does not exist, but rather that many of those teachers who may have had a legitimate claim for recognition during the 1960s and 1970s have either changed occupation, or have been absorbed one way or another within the profession. Some are casual teachers or in ethnic schools, Saturday schools for community languages, adult education and so on, even without formal recognition and registration. Some of these teachers are still in the process of achieving recognition through long and exhausting years in part-time university study.

The qualifications of teachers have been a cause of criticism directed towards insertion classes and ethnic schools. The truth of the matter is that education systems are more than willing to waive qualifications requirements whenever it may be expedient to do so. The present writer knows of teachers of Spanish who

have been asked to teach Italian, teachers of Italian who have been asked to teach French, and teachers of French/German and Italian who have been asked to teach Japanese after very short or no training in the language. Only 40% of the teachers of Japanese who responded to a questionnaire in 1991 (Di Biase in press) had studied this language at tertiary level for two years.

4.1.2 Teachers' Language Proficiency

An Italian version of the Australian Second Language Proficiency Ratings (ASLPR) has been developed by the NLLIA Language Testing and Curriculum Centre, Griffith University, and is being used to measure the proficiency in Italian of the teachers of the language in Queensland.

Similarly, the NLLIA Language Testing Centre at the University of Melbourne, has developed a proficiency test for teachers of Italian in Victorian primary and secondary schools, with the aim of providing accreditation for people who wish to teach Italian (Centre for Language Teaching and Research 1992).

In Italy, a proficiency certificate, which assesses different levels, has been developed by the La Sapienza University in Rome. A proficiency certificate is also issued by the Perugia University for Foreigners. The test can be taken abroad through the Italian Institute of Culture, but it is only administered at present in a few countries. Australia will be included. The certificate has Europe-wide recognition for people who wish to undertake further studies there. Therefore it would be useful to establish an equivalence with the Australia-based tests in Italian. Likewise the Australian Language Certificates is a project of the Australian Bicentennial Multicultural Foundation co-ordinated by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) which aims to develop proficiency certificates in six languages of wider teaching. Italian is one of these six languages. The first stage of this Melbourne University based project began in 1990 (*Vox* 1991/5:6).

4.1.3 NLLIA/LARC Survey

The following findings are based on the survey conducted by NLLIA/LARC (Di Biase in press). A questionnaire for teachers of LOTE, including Italian, was developed within the context of an AACLAME funded teacher development project granted to the University of Sydney and the NSW Department of School Education. The aim of the questionnaire was to ascertain what the professional development needs of language teachers might be according to the teachers' perceptions. At the same time this exercise was an opportunity to collect information about qualifications (including those obtained overseas), in-service participation, language skills, self-evaluation and so on.

Between the last term of 1990 and third term 1991, the questionnaire was distributed to Government schools through regional (metropolitan and country) offices of the Department of School Education, to Catholic Schools through the Catholic Education Office in Sydney, and to teachers of insertion classes through

COASIT officers. Some were distributed through NLLIA/LARC's contacts and to teachers attending its in-service courses.

In NSW in 1991 there were 730 secondary LOTE teachers employed in Government schools including the Open High School and at least another 400 LOTE teachers in the other systems. Out of the approximately 750 questionnaires distributed, 390 were returned and of these, 82 (21%) were from primary and secondary teachers of Italian. This represents 48.2% of the estimated 170 teachers of Italian employed in NSW schools systems. COASIT in Sydney has a further 77 casual and full-time teachers employed to work in insertion classes in primary schools, but only four returns came from those teachers, a very small response representing less than 5% and under 1% of the total return. This means that while the results can be taken as fairly representative of teachers of Italian in the NSW education systems, the same cannot be said, unfortunately, for COASIT teachers.

4.1.4 Areas of Employment

More than half (53.7%) of the 82 teachers who responded to the questionnaire were employed in a Government school, 32.9% in a Catholic school, approximately another 9.8% in other non-government schools. The remainder were equally divided between casual employment and insertion classes. Nearly 66% of the teachers were employed full-time and 13% part-time. This contrasts strongly with the status of teachers in insertion classes and ethnic schools generally who are overwhelmingly part-time and/or casual.

More than half (57.3%) worked in secondary schools, while 28% were employed as primary teachers. This reflects the fact that most of the language teachers (including Italian) employed by education authorities are secondary school teachers, and only a minority are employed as specialist language teachers in the NSW primary schools' Community Languages Program (just under one hundred teachers in eleven languages). Thus the education systems rely on COASIT teachers for much of the teaching of Italian in primary schools. A similar pattern obtains in other States as well. Sydney metropolitan schools had three quarters of the respondent Italian teachers, but a significant proportion (21%) worked in country schools.

4.1.5 Language Studies, Background and Qualifications

Perhaps it is not surprising that more than half (56%) of the teachers of Italian responding to the questionnaire were from an Italian speaking background. There were, however, a number of LOTEs spoken and/or taught by the teachers of Italian, ranging from the common combination with French and/or German, to Modern Greek, Spanish and less common ones such as Tagalog. The first teaching language of most of this subset of respondents was Italian, and only for about one fifth of them was Italian the second or third teaching language.

The need for appropriate language-specific qualifications for the job emerges when we consider responses to the question of what LOTE(s) were studied at

tertiary level for two or more years. A surprisingly high 28% of respondents did not study Italian at tertiary level. Half of these studied French in combination with Latin or another language, but nearly 10% did not undertake any tertiary language study at all. Most had attained qualifications in Australia, with the BA Dip Ed dominating the scene (55%) with about 20% having a basic BA or Diploma of Teaching; nearly 10% had postgraduate qualifications.

Well over 25% of the Italian teachers had attained qualifications overseas; a handful (4%) had secondary teaching certificates and tertiary diplomas and degrees including postgraduate studies. The countries in which these qualifications were obtained are presented in Table 4.2. Although most of these overseas qualifications were obtained in Italy, a significant proportion came from various other countries.

Country	% of teachers of Italian with overseas qualifications
Britain	3.7%
France	4.9%
Germany	1.2%
Italy	17.0%
Philippines	1.2%
South Africa	1.2%
Spain	1.2%
USA	1.2%
Total *	31.6%

Table 4.2
Countries in which qualifications were obtained
** 3 respondents nominated two countries*

4.1.6 Self-evaluation of Language Skills

Question 15 of the questionnaire asked teachers to 'indicate the extent of [their] competence in [their teaching] language by circling only one of the numbers in each of the skills listed'. The skills were the four receptive and productive macro-skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. The four point scale was labelled 'basic', 'fair', 'good' and 'excellent'.

The method of measurement does not yield an accurate picture of the teachers' language competence. What can be gained is an idea of how one group of teachers, the 82 teachers of Italian, perceived their own skills, in comparison with the self-rating of all 390 teachers of LOTEs who responded to the survey.

Self-Rating	BASIC (%)		FAIR (%)		BASIC (%)		FAIR (%)	
Skill	Italian Teachers	All LOTEs	Italian Teachers	All LOTEs	Italian Teachers	All LOTEs	Italian Teachers	All LOTEs
Listening	0	2.8	3.7	5.9	26.8	26.2	69.5	65.1
Speaking	0	2.6	12.2	11.5	47.6	33.1	40.2.	52.8
Reading	0	2.3	2.4	5.1	36.6	27.4	60.9	65.1
Writing	0	2.6	12.2	9.5	45.1	34.9	42.6	52.8

Table 4.3
Self evaluation of teaching language skills of Italian and all LOTE teachers

At the top end of the scale (excellent), the teachers of Italian rate themselves as having a lower command of macro-skills particularly 'speaking' skills than

other LOTE teachers. Only 40.2% of the respondent teachers of Italian rate themselves as excellent, compared with 52.8% of respondent LOTE teachers as a group, a difference of nearly 13%. For the skill of writing only 42.6% of the teachers of Italian rated themselves as excellent, by comparison with 52.8% for all respondents. The exception is the skill of listening, where 69.5% of Italian teachers scored themselves as excellent, as against 65.1% for all respondents.

On the other hand, none of the teachers of Italian rated themselves as basic in any of the skills. These facts appear to point to the need for experiences that are language specific and language enriching, perhaps in-country, in order to strengthen skills, including in particular writing skills in the Italian language.

4.1.7 Teaching Experience and Professional Development Activities

Among the respondent teachers of Italian there were more with teaching experience of more than twelve years than there were of those with under two years experience, while the majority have experience of between two and twelve years (Table 4.4).

No. of years experience	Respondent teachers of Italian	
	Total	%
Less than 2	11	13%
From 2 to 6	29	35.4%
From 7 to 12	25	30.5%
More than 12	15	18.2%
No answer	2	

Table 4.4
Teaching experience of teachers of Italian responding to questionnaire

At the same time it is clear that teachers are making significant efforts in respect of both professional development and language enrichment. For instance responses to the question on professional development show that in the last five years, only 5% of the respondent teachers of Italian had not undertaken in-service courses, while the average for the group was more than two courses of between twelve and sixty hours in the last five years.

As part of professional language enrichment, many teachers of Italian go to considerable trouble and expense to travel to Italy, but not everyone is able to do this. As well as the cost, there may be family commitments, and it may be difficult to arrange time away from work. Professional development courses in Italy are usually held during the Australian teaching year. Despite these difficulties only 22 out of the 82 respondents had never travelled to Italy, while 58 had done so at least once, and 38 of those twice or more within the last ten years.

4.1.8 Medium of Instruction, Teachers' Objectives and Achievement

Despite the above reported efforts of teachers in respect of their own language maintenance and enrichment more than half of the teachers report using English as a medium of instruction in the classroom. Only about a quarter use Italian, and the remainder use a mixture of Italian and English as is shown in Table 4.5.

Language used	Respondent teachers of Italian	
	Total	%
English	43	52.4%
Italian	22	26.8%
English and Italian	13	15.9%
No answer	4	4.9%

Table 4.5
Medium of instruction in Italian classes

Yet the majority of the teachers when asked to rank teaching/learning objectives gave first priority to the students' acquisition of oral/aural skills in the language. Reading and writing skills were mainly allocated second priority though a handful gave these skills first priority. Other objectives, such as achieving knowledge of grammar, appreciation of Italian culture or literature were given a sprinkling of first priorities and increasingly lower priorities in that order.

There seems therefore to be a clear contradiction between the top ranking of aural/oral skills in Italian, and the top ranking of English as medium of instruction. This contradiction might not stem purely from the teachers' lack of language skills in Italian. It could also come from commonly used curricular approaches which rely on English, from the materials used in the classroom and from the constraints imposed by having to prepare students for external exams which make extensive use of English.

This contradiction may be read as consistent with the way in which teachers of Italian perceive the success of their students, as can be seen in their response to Question 25, which asked 'How would you rate (general impression only) your students' results in terms of your objectives?' Respondents could choose one value on the four point scale from 'highly successful' to 'poor' (Table 4.6).

Rating	Italian teachers response %	All LOTEs response %
Highly successful	17.1%	19.2%
Fairly successful	59.8%	62.1%
Average	19.5%	15.1%
Poor	0	0.8%
No answer	3.7%	2.8%

Table 4.6
Teachers' rating of students' success

Success of students in the top two categories is rated consistently lower by the responding group of teachers of Italian, compared with the rating given by the responding group of LOTE teachers as a whole. Only 17.1% of the teachers of Italian rated their students as highly successful compared with 19.2% of the LOTE group generally. The fairly successful rating was given to their students by 59.8% of the teachers of Italian and by 62.1% of the LOTE teachers generally.

4.1.9 Teaching Resources and Computers

Teachers were asked whether computers were available in their school and whether they used computers for their school work. Responses show that computers are available in almost every school where Italian is taught (91.5%). However, only about 35% of the Italian teachers make use of computers in their teaching, about as much, or as little, as other language teachers (31%) (Table 4.7).

	Respondent teachers of Italian %		All respondent LOTEs %	
Response	Computer in school	Use of Computers	Computer in school	Use of Computers
Yes	91.5	35.4	74.4	31.0
No	6.1	63.4	22.1	65.4
No Answer	2.4	1.2	3.6	3.6

Table 4.7
Computer facilities and use at school

Over 60% of the respondent Italian teachers are not using computers. There is a warning here of the need for training. Teachers apparently have little confidence in the use of computers in language education. Because of the high investment by education authorities in computer technology, including its use in distance education, a significant amount of specialised training for language teachers will be required before such technology can be used efficiently.

When asked to rate the provision of print media teaching resources such as books, the Italian teachers judged the resources available in their school positively: 78% rated them as Excellent or Adequate. This compares favourably with the 68% of language teachers generally who made a similar judgement about their own school's resources.

Teaching resources are:	Respondent Teachers of Italian %	All LOTEs %
Excellent	20.7	17.2
Adequate	57.3	50.8
Minimal	13.4	23.1
Inadequate	6.1	6.7
No Answer	2.4	2.3

Table 4.8
Teaching resources in school

4.1.10 Perception of Professional Development Needs

The Questionnaire asked teachers to rank, in order of priority, eight areas of study which they believed would improve their teaching. There was also a ninth area which was left open for respondents to add any other area of study of importance to them. Three respondents wrote in the open category that they needed 'practice in speaking the language'.

For the eight areas nominated in the question, the ranking and percentage of priority responses are given in Table 4.9. The proportion was worked out as an average of the first three priorities allocated because most respondents did not allocate priorities beyond three or four.

Rank	Area of study	% of Responses
1	Improving own teaching skills	21.0%
2	Design and production of materials	19.0%
3	Improving own language skills	18.3%
4	Understanding of second language acquisition research and applications to teaching	14.9%
5	Computers in language teaching	13.9%
6	Understanding of the culture	5.4%
7	Grammar in language teaching	4.1%
8	Language testing	3.4%

Table 4.9
Areas of study that would improve teaching (as ranked by respondent teachers of Italian)

It is not surprising that the areas of study to which the teachers attributed a higher priority, are very practical ones: to improve teaching one needs good teaching skills and teaching materials, or the ability to make the latter. This is perhaps why the use of computers was also rated fairly highly, even though most of this group of teachers do not use them. A recurring theme through the questionnaire has been the importance to the teachers of their own language skills, confirmed here by the high ranking priority given to study for the improvement of these skills. The opportunity for teachers to develop their language skills is of course imperative if they are to be competent and confident teachers.

These responses could indicate also a need for language teachers to acquire knowledge of a more theoretical nature, for example about second language acquisition and its application to teaching. Many current teachers would have little knowledge in this area unless they had studied psycholinguistics and this would have been rare. The whole area has grown in importance only in the last couple of decades, and so there is a wish to know what it may have to offer to language teachers already in the field.

There are also some comments worth making about areas of study to which teachers gave lower priority. 'Understanding of the culture' is probably not perceived as very useful, since it is given, unfortunately, little space in the NSW curriculum and assessment. Most teachers of Italian would probably know a great deal more about Italy and its culture than course requirements specify, or than they can in practice teach. This writer's feeling is that it is almost scandalous that the syllabus and examination for HSC 3 Unit Italian has no cultural, literary or historical content. Such content could at least provide some organising principles, options or themes around which candidates could prepare. The current 3 unit examination appears to concentrate efforts on repetitious language exercises that are supposed to be harder than the 2 Unit counterpart, but which in fact simply require more time and do not test more than a very small number of items of vocabulary and structure. It is certainly legitimate to ask whether students would feel sufficient motivation to learn more complex language, if there is no interesting and complex content or knowledge to acquire which might require special lexicon and structures.

Grammar is another area of low priority as an area of study for teachers of Italian, largely because of current attitudes to the teaching of grammar in any language study. The so-called grammar-translation method has been driven out of the classroom, but here perhaps the baby has been thrown out with the bath water. While one should not use grammar as a vehicle for teaching language, for

language teachers an understanding of grammar is as legitimate as an understanding of the literature and culture of the language, even though not all of that will be taught directly to the student.

The importance of professional development for teachers of Italian is clear from the response to the final closed question concerning the desire to upgrade their current qualifications

In particular what can be gleaned from this analysis of the priorities of teachers for professional development as well as from the responses to the open question (Q31) is that teachers of Italian are seeking: more flexible postgraduate courses; opportunities for acquiring computer literacy; regular contact with other language teachers for exchange of ideas; opportunity to view other LOTE classrooms in action; more opportunities for study of LOTE overseas including teacher exchange programs with Italy. Teachers are seeking in-service courses, with more emphasis on practical courses rather than linguistic theory based courses. For their own language enrichment the teachers require opportunities for improving speaking skills. In the area of resources, respondents identified the need for more oral/aural resources in Italian (audio and video) and at the same time for these and others teaching materials to be suited to the Australian classroom.

4.2 Teachers of Italian in the Community School and Insertion Classes

This section is based on research conducted by Helen and Giovanni Andreoni. The information is abstracted from 143 interviews conducted in different States and from questionnaires sent to community-based Italian school committees. Twenty-seven questionnaires were sent out and ten returned. Forty-eight interviews were transcribed.

There are two main causes for the crisis in morale identified amongst Italian language teachers. The first has to do with the both the Green and White Papers (DEET 1990b and 1991) and the proposed changes to the organisation of the non-systemic language class. The second has to do with the fact that the first cohort of Italian language teachers, who are Italian-born and for whom Italian is a first language, is being replaced by Australian-born Italian language teachers for whom Italian is a second language. The Italian language teachers are dealing with these issues across Australia, often in isolation, little realising that many of their peers are involved in the same challenges.

4.2.1 The Missionary Phase

Those who have been teaching Italian in various non-systemic classrooms since the late 1960s are now recognising that they have come to the end of what might be termed the missionary phase of Italian language teaching in Australia. The Italian language classes were conducted in a variety of settings by a dedicated band of native speakers whose aims and objectives were to teach not only the

Italian language, but Italian culture. Whilst this group of teachers was highly fluent and literate in Italian, they did not always have teaching qualifications recognised by the Australian educational authorities. They may or may not have had Italian tertiary qualifications. Many of the teachers were poorly paid, paid late or even not paid at all, using their own homes as offices.

Very gradually teaching conditions improved and Italian language teachers were able to undertake the studies and processes necessary to have their skills formally recognised by the Australian educational authorities. This trend first emerged in the large centres where there was a pool of teachers. In smaller towns and isolated country areas, many of the Italian communities still rely on the dedication of the native speakers and their willingness to accept less than ideal conditions.

The changeover from these native speakers, who worked often as volunteers for over 20 years, to the Australian-born and trained Italian language teachers has been made unnecessarily difficult for a variety of reasons.

Firstly, there has been no official recognition by either the Australian or the Italian Governments of the important work done by these Italian teachers. That we have a National Policy on Languages (Lo Bianco 1987), or that we are debating that Italian is the most appropriate second language to be studied in Australia, is in no small part due to the dedication of these Italian language teachers. They and the Italian communities kept Italian alive when almost no one else cared.

Secondly, as these teachers approach retirement after the achievements of two decades that culminated in the National Policy on Languages in the second half of the 1980s, they see their life's work undermined by the Green Paper and White Paper in the early 1990s (ibid.). The spread of Italian should be regarded as an educational success which could serve as a model for other languages. Yet this success is sometimes resented and criticism is sometimes levelled that the Italian community is getting more than its fair share of the taxpayers' money. This attitude fails to acknowledge the voluntary work of the Italian community and the significant contribution of the Italian Government in supporting and sustaining the teaching of Italian in Australia, largely to Australian-born children of English speaking background.

4.2.2 The Professionalisation Phase

As well as having to deal with the low morale generated by the Green and White Paper process and the uncertainty about the future of the non-systemic language class and the control and input from the Italian community, Italian language teachers who were born and trained in Australia, have had additional challenges, particularly with reference to their Italian language skills. In fact some of the native speakers among Italian teachers are critical of the language skills of the young Australian-born Italian teachers. The following comments are examples:

- *Parlano australiano o dialetto stretto* (Transcript 24:4).
  Translation: They speak Australian or strict dialect.

- They are trying to employ teachers who have qualifications, but they do not speak Italian, they have studied it up to a point. The Italian women who we have employed do speak Italian, but gradually they have been ousted and replaced by those who have studied Italian and are not native Italian speakers ... Half of them (with qualifications) are second generation Italian (Translation from Italian, Transcript 29:1).

Since migration to Australia from Italy is now almost non-existent, the native speaker of Italian who can be employed as a teacher will become rarer and rarer. There seems little point, however, in blaming the Australian-born Italian language teacher for not always having native speaker ability. This is part of the process of migration. It is of strategic importance, therefore, to ensure that Italian language education in Australia is supported from the earliest school years.

Recognising that extending the Italian language skills of these Australian-born teachers is critical, the Italian Government funds in-service programs for Italian teachers in Australia and scholarships to enable Italian language teachers to attend specialised courses in Italy.

A further stress being experienced by the Italian language teacher in Australia is the general one to which all Australian teachers are currently being subjected. Many education systems are undergoing massive restructuring and amalgamations. The democratisation of decision-making and resource allocation at school level has not always increased interest in LOTEs in general and Italian in particular. These changes can be used as an excuse to eliminate existing Italian programs, especially when such moves are officially sanctioned and encouraged with extra financing for other languages, for example, when a successful, established Italian language program is replaced by an Asian language for which there is no teacher with the appropriate skills. this is particularly discouraging when Italian language teachers are rightly concerned about the kind of career Australia is willing and able to offer, regardless of whether this is in a systemic or non-systemic school. Without a prospect of a career, few young Italian speakers will be willing to commit themselves to such an uncertain future and the rigorous training and workloads that the profession demands. There is also the problem that in some places in Australia, there is already an oversupply of Italian teachers. The following quotation illustrates the problem:

> I graduated with Italian and English and I can't find anything. Unless you take Japanese. The people doing Japanese, they got jobs (Transcript 47:16).

4.2.3 Educational Profile of Italian Language Teachers

The following information is based on responses to a questionnaire and on interviews.

Language Background of Teaching Staff

From the responses to the questionnaire (Q7) it can be gleaned that the Italian-born teachers of Italian are between 20% and 30% of the ethnic schools and insertion class teachers. The rest are mainly Australian-born of Italian background and a small number of other backgrounds.

Teachers Qualifications
In Sydney and Melbourne the vast majority of the teachers working with the Italian school committees had Australian teaching qualifications; about 20% had no formal teaching qualification, but most of these had some other tertiary qualification.

Language Ability of Teaching Staff
When asked to evaluate the language skills of their staff, the committees who appoint the teachers expressed confidence in the teachers' skills with some exceptions in the area of writing skills.

Dialect Language Skills
Among the respondents only four school committees who work in areas where there are very small numbers of teaching staff were able to give any details about the dialects known by their language teaching staff. The dialects most often mentioned were Sicilian and Venetian. The Italian School Committee at the Sunshine Coast stated that 50% of the staff could understand, speak and read a dialect.

In-service and Cross-Systemic Co-operation
Some of the community-based organisations, particularly the largest, provide in-service courses for their teachers. These are often organised jointly with other educational systems. This is an obvious need for co-operation both between community-based organisations and the schools and between the Australian Commonwealth, State and Italian Governments. All committees identified in-service courses for teachers as a high priority.

Recognition and Recommendations
We recommend that the dedication, commitment and success of the foundation Italian language teachers be officially recognised by both the Italian and Australian authorities. This might take the form of an honour or appropriate *onoreficenza*.

The new generation of Italian language teachers with Australian qualifications needs to be provided with a range of opportunities both in Australia and in Italy to upgrade language skills and increase their familiarity with a range of language teaching methodologies. In Australia, in-service opportunities should be provided to develop strong bonds between Italian language teachers across Australia and encourage discussion of issues specific to Italian in Australia and the teaching of Italian in Australia. It would be appropriate to encourage the further development of a national association of Italian teachers.

Workshops, conferences, teleconferencing and newsletters provide further avenues for the support of the Italian language teacher and opportunities for professional development. A central/national curriculum overview committee is recommended for the purpose of examining Australia-wide syllabuses (Parker, S: personal communication). This in turn will maintain and extend the quality of the Italian language programs.

5 MOTIVATIONS FOR LEARNING AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS ITALIAN

Before moving to the more Italian-specific component in this chapter, it may be of interest to the reader to cast a rapid historical glance over the way in which issues of motivation, incentives and disincentives in the area of language learning have been treated in Australia. A world-wide study on motivations for learning Italian will be summarised, followed by the motivational survey conducted specifically for the present project. Discussion will focus on the students of Italian in the sample surveyed. The closing part will deal with changes in attitudes towards languages in the wider Australian community.

From the 1960s, and perhaps long before then, both academic and government reports discussed the factors which influence students to take a foreign language. Typically this discussion is about factors generating interest or a lack of interest in language learning on the part of second language learners. Thus the target group of this discussion are, typically, monolingual students. It would appear that the objective of the debate was and still is to identify factors which will lead to an increase in the numbers and proportions of students generally, and the Anglo-Celtic majority in particular, studying languages.

In Wykes study (1966:iii) of language learning in universities, the Australian Humanities Research Council expressed concern about the 'negligible' number of language students in the 1960s and made a point that was to be reiterated in the years to come: 'The main problem is the apathy about the need for "language" study which prevails in the Australian community and extends to the schools and even to many faculties in the Universities.'

Wykes outlined (1966:10-11) a number of factors, including compulsion due to faculty requirements, which influenced students to take a foreign language at university. Among these she found the following:

- the study of the language at school;
- the number and variety of languages offered;
- the age, size and type of university;
- the availability of elementary courses for languages infrequently taught in the schools;
- the cultural climate of a city or State.

Wykes pointed to the need for a 'rethinking of the role of modern languages in the modern Australian universities' (ibid.: 3), and to the particular need to make language courses more relevant and interesting to students, an oft-repeated theme in the years to come.

The Working Party on Languages and Linguistics in Australian universities (1977:27-30) outlined factors which it considered were contributing to declining numbers of language students:

- fluctuation in language enrolments at the secondary level;
- student demand;
- gradual abolition of compulsory language requirements;
- community attitudes towards language study. (For example, 'Monolingualism is a characteristic of Australian society and its influence is becoming increasingly apparent at all levels of educational experience'.)

- quality of teaching;
- student workload;

Academic research in the 1980s containing some discussion of factors affecting language study in Australia was carried out by Bowden, Starrs and Quinn (1984, 1987(a) and 1987(b)). Their Australia-wide study was initially directed at investigating the 'social and organisational factors associated with the introduction of new technology into teaching and learning' (op. cit.: 1). The project expanded to raise many general issues in language teaching at the university level, such as students' expectations about university courses, traditional versus communicative methodologies and similar issues. Some interesting points are made, such as the discussion about the use of the target language (TL) as the medium of instruction and students' preference for courses which emphasised oral ability. Their study (1987(b):34) concluded: 'Language teaching in Australian universities is in a period of acute stress.'

In *Widening Our Horizons*, Leal et al. (1991:122-126) identified a number of 'Incentives and Disincentives to Languages Studies' at the tertiary level.

The disincentives identified were:

- Unreliability of government support, e.g. marked changes in priority;
- Unreliability of employer support;
- Unreliability of institutional support, e.g. relaxation of language requirements, 'though this continues to be a matter of debate in some places';
- Demanding nature of language study;
- Unreliability of community support from the majority community of people with an English speaking background.

Widening Our Horizons also located disincentives stemming from the attitudes of other communities: 'Even among non-English speaking community groups, support for courses in their languages in higher education has declined in certain areas, causing courses to be discontinued.' There is no evidence given to support this statement, though there should be, because it is a surprising statement. It does not make clear the meaning of the supposed lack of support, and whether, for example, it is a question of monetary or other support.

The incentives Leal et al. identified were:

- Enhanced rewards in education for language study;
- Enhanced rewards in employment for language study;
- Greater flexibility in course provision;
- Greater investment in course provision.

In the White Paper (DEET, Companion Volume to the Policy Paper 1991:72-73), some research into disincentives to language learning is discussed at length. In the study reported on (Tuffin and Wilson 1990) the impediments identified included:

- Disincentives arising from an incompatibility between student background and course content, e.g. having mixed classes of native speakers (NS) and non-native speakers (NNS);
- Disincentives related to student assessment, e.g. low weightings given to languages; NS and NNS competing in the same examinations;

- Disincentives related to the school curriculum, e.g. lack of continuity, lack of administrative support, poor status of languages;
- Disincentives related to the students' future after they leave school, e.g. combined degrees tend to be longer, little opportunity to use language proficiency in many jobs.

In the summary of this research it is conceded that 'being a native speaker of a language or having a family background in it are in fact very powerful incentives for effective language learning' (op. cit.: 72).

The White Paper's approach emphasises motivating rather than compelling people to study languages. There is, however, some discussion in the Green Paper (DEET 1990b:24-25) about overseas educational models in which language study is compulsory. Generally speaking, there has been a move towards the idea of compulsion since the National Policy on Languages which supported the teaching of languages as a normal or expected part of the education of children at primary and junior (though not senior) secondary level (op. cit.: 138-139).

As can be appreciated from the above survey, it is much easier, or so it seems, to identify negative factors and disincentives than positive ones. A common theme appears to be a presumed Australian apathy towards language learning which, with all due respect to the above commentators, remains an open question. Put another way, the education system may have committed a serious error of judgement in ostracising languages from the common educational baggage on the one hand and then being extremely surprised or even upset that the great majority of students did not take them up somehow 'naturally'. In other countries high enrolment for language studies is closely connected with the high status of languages in the curriculum. Because education authorities decide to attribute importance to the study of languages, as they do for mathematics or science, people then realise their value and study them as a normal part of the curriculum. If Australia is going to value skills and knowledge in LOTEs, it is the responsibility of the education authorities acting on behalf of society as a whole to provide leadership and resources. There is little point in attributing the traditionally low enrolment in languages to a presumed lack of interest in languages by potential students.

If anything it may be surprising that rather than apathy in Australia there is such a tenacious and reasonably large bundle of devotees who will choose language studies even in the absence of those incentives and rewards bestowed on more fortunate subject areas. Let us look more closely at some of these devotees.

5.1 Students' Attitudes

Studies on the role that motivation and attitudes play in language learning have done little more than confirm common sense assumptions, such as that 'positive attitudes and motivation are related to success in second language learning' (Lightbown and Spada 1992:39). What the causal relationship between the two may be is yet to be shown. Does successful learning induce positive motivation towards the language, or is it the motivation that promotes success in second language learning?

Many issues in the motivation/attitudes area remain to be resolved. It is not altogether clear whether an instrumental orientation in the learner, such as perceived needs related to present or future career, affects language learning more (or less) than integrative orientation, such as a desire to affiliate with the people who speak the language and/or share their culture. Nor is it clear whether and to what extent the need to communicate in an actual situation, is as strong in determining outcomes as the context in which language learning is to occur. For instance, the context may require that a second or foreign language be acquired in order to have access to certain university studies, as was the case in the Australian educational context up to the 1960s. Further, it is not clear whether the learner's perception of support from the target language group or other socio-psychological factors may be critical. Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991:173-184) give an exhaustive overview of the complexities involved. Whatever the case may be and surely, in the end, various mixtures of those factors may be found to contribute, Australia presents a very interesting set of circumstances for advancing understanding of this area.

Some early information on the motivations for studying Italian in Australia can be found in a study commissioned by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and carried out between 1979 and 1980 (Baldelli et al. 1981). The study was based on a massive world-wide survey with a systematic and statistically based distribution of 26,000 questionnaires in seventy-two countries including Australia. A brief and interesting English summary of the main results of this survey concerning English-speaking countries will be found in Vignuzzi (1986), on which the following comments are based. Unlike the studies mentioned above, this one does attempt to identify positive and specific motivations as well as correlations.

According to this study, in Australia in 1979 two out of three respondents who studied Italian were female and nearly half were under 18 years of age. The great majority (72%) had parents, or grandparents or other relatives who spoke Italian as their first language. A similar survey ten years later would have found a markedly different situation, with the students of Italian including a much greater proportion of people under 18 and of people from a wider range of backgrounds, even though the influence of an Italian background as well as the social network of friends and families undoubtedly continued to be a strong underlying factor.

The survey found that Australia stood out in the level of responses which identified affective reasons for studying a language, 15%, which was nearly double the world average. The Australian responses to other main reasons seem to follow fairly closely the world average. There is a balanced distribution of study reasons and culture-related reasons with about one third of the responses favouring each. The next four main reasons provided account for less than 10% each, with tourism accounting for below 5%.

The level of response for specific motivations grouped under 'study', 'work' and 'general culture' in individual countries does not differ markedly from world average. The three most common reasons for studying Italian given world-wide were '[in order to] follow shows in Italian' (first in Australia as in the US); '[in order to] read Italian literary works' (third in Australia); and '[because] Italian is an optional school subject' (second in Australia), each with between 14% and 20% of responses. These were followed in fourth and fifth place by: '[because]

Italian is a compulsory school subject', and '[in order to] follow radio/TV in Italian', with about 8% each. An interesting result is that work-related reasons come consistently at the bottom of the list, ranking between eleventh and nineteenth (the last possible rank), but in Australia, as in Canada, the reason that '[the respondent] works in an office which deals with Italians', came in a high ranking sixth position.

In the above results, world-wide as in Australia, there is a healthy mix of integrative (cultural, affective) and instrumental (study or work-related) reasons, whereas the former seem to predominate in the case of Italian. The pattern which will be found in the Nine Languages profile study discussed below, all things being equal, is not greatly divergent. The findings of both studies highlight the risks inherent in current trends in Australia to place an inordinate emphasis on purely instrumental reasons for language study, which, undervaluing or devaluing the importance of integrative reasons, may lead to an overall drop in LOTE students rather than an increase.

5.1.1 Attitudinal and Motivational Factors Study

One of the purposes of the Nine Languages profile commissioned by the NLLIA was to determine the factors influencing students to continue or to discontinue the study of a language at school. To that end it seemed appropriate to survey, by means of a questionnaire, students in Year 11 who had studied a language in Year 10, taking a sample from all States and education systems. The Questionnaire was designed by a subgroup of the Nine Languages research teams. The theoretical background and model for the analysis of answers from students' questionnaires is derived from a discussion paper provided by Dr Ng Bee Chin of La Trobe University.

Practical constraints suggested that it was not realistic to survey every school, nor to work out a totally random sample on account of the number of languages involved and the extreme differences in their presence in schools, States, systems and so on. This led to a decision that each of the nine languages research groups would nominate a limited number of secondary schools across States and systems wherever possible and in which their language was offered at Year 11. Provided the schools agreed to participate, they would be surveyed.

5.1.2 Participating Schools and Students

The questionnaire was distributed in mid-1992 to Year 11 students in sixty-nine schools which granted permission for the survey to be carried out. The returns relevant to the Italian project came from a subset of twenty-one schools from five States, i.e. Victoria (eight schools), NSW (seven schools) and Western Australia, Queensland and South Australia (with three, two and one respectively). The participating Government schools numbered eleven, while six were Catholic and four were Independent. The schools returned 253 questionnaires from Year 11 students who were studying or had discontinued Italian. These 253 respondents constitute what will henceforth be called the

Italian set to distinguish it from sets of students analysed in profiles of other languages.

State	Respondent students from Year 11	
	No of respondents	% from each State
Victoria	77	30.4%
Western Australia	69	27.3%
NSW	57	22.5%
South Australia	42	16.6%
Queensland	8	3.2%
Total	253	100%

Table 5.1
Italian set, students distributed by State

The Italian set of students were reasonably distributed across the States as shown in Table 5.1. The distribution did not quite match the actual distribution of students of Italian in each of the States, but essentially the structure of distribution is fairly close, except for Western Australia which is over-represented at the expense of Victoria, and there is an absence of returns from Tasmania and the Territories.

Type of School	Respondent students from Year 11	
	No of respondents	% from each type of school
Catholic	175	69.2%
Government	66	26.1%
Independent	12	4.7 %
Total	253	100%

Table 5.2
Italian set, students distributed by school system

The distribution of the Italian set students across education systems (Table 5.2) reflects, broadly speaking, the actual distribution with two thirds of the respondents from Catholic schools, one quarter from Government schools, and nearly one in twenty from the Independent schools. The Government school system is under-represented here.

Status	Italian studied as Language 1		Italian studied as Language 2		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Discontinued	108	45%	30	12.5%	138	57.5%
Continued	90	37.5%	12	5.0%	102	42.5%
Total	211	82.5%	42	17.5%	240*	100%

Table 5.3
Italian set, students who continued or discontinued Italian
** Because some questionnaires returned contained inappropriate responses, there is a discrepancy of 13 (or 5.1% of the sample) between the total number of questionnaires and the number of returns.*

Some secondary students undertake studies in more than one language, which means that Italian may be undertaken as the major or a minor language study (L1 or L2). Of the students of Italian sampled, over three quarters (82.5%) were studying Italian as L1, while a smaller proportion (17.5%) were studying it as L2. A small number of the Italian set (5.1% of the sample) gave Italian as both L1 and L2, so their answers to this question had to be disregarded.

Well over half the students in the sample discontinued Italian after Year 10. Those who study Italian as L2 are much more likely to drop it after Year 10 than those who do it as L1, although those students also show a high attrition rate. In

this respect Italian is more like other 'modern languages', such as French or German, which have low continuity rates, than like other 'community languages' such as Modern Greek or Chinese, which have a higher continuity rate.

5.1.3 Profile of Students

Gender: Female students in the Italian set outnumbered male students almost two to one, more precisely 61.7% female and 38.3% male. The pattern is fairly common in secondary school languages in Australia, with Chinese being among the few exceptions. The national average distribution by gender for students of Italian in secondary schools in 1988 was 57.3% females to 42.7% males. In the sample being analysed here females are probably over-represented.

Country of birth: The majority (84.2%) of students of the Italian set were born in Australia with a significant minority (15. 8%) born overseas. Only 2.8% were actually born in Italy, while the other overseas-born were spread over nineteen different countries. This distribution highlights the 'modern language' aspect of Italian in Australia.

Language spoken at home: More than one third (37.2%) of the Italian set either used Italian or an Italian dialect at home. Whilst this shows the community language aspect of Italian, it must be pointed out that they are an Australia-born second generation majority as is evident from the country of birth results above. It is also significant that, given the option, 'Italian' rather than 'an Italian dialect' is the preferred label for the language spoken at home by the second generation.

Language	Number of speakers	Percentage %
Arabic	7	2.8%
French	7	2.8%
Spanish	10	4.0%
Other languages	37	14.4%
Italian	68	26.9%
An Italian dialect	26	10.3%
English only	88	34.8%
No answer	10	4.0%
Total	253	100%

Table 5.4
Italian set, language used at home

Interestingly, backgrounds in a variety of other languages are well represented; when added together they make up nearly 25% of the set, but more second than first generation. Together with the Italian and dialect background students, students with a background in a language other than English form a considerable majority (61.2%) of the Italian set (Table 5.4), while in the general population by comparison only 13% of Australian residents speak a language other than English at home (Table 1.1). This would lend support to the proposition that in Australia, people who already use a language other than English at home are more likely to undertake formal studies in that language and other languages. It may be interesting to cross-check with results in the other language profiles.

The questionnaire gave students the choice to select, among the languages, 'Italian' or 'An Italian dialect'. Of the ninety-four who ticked one of these two options only twenty-six, i.e. little more than one quarter of them, selected 'An Italian dialect'. Thus, the majority perception (or the preferred label) of the home language by the Italian background second generation is not 'dialect', but 'Italian' - at least in this sample (Table 5.4).

	Father	Mother
Primary	15.4%	11.9%
Post primary	31.2%	36.4%
Year 12	19.8%	26.1%
Undergraduate degree	7.9%	5.5%
Postgraduate degree	17.4%	13.4%
Other	5.1%	2.4%

Table 5.5
Italian set, educational background of parents

The educational background that emerges from Table 5.5 would indicate an educational profile higher than average. Over 25% of fathers and 20% of mothers have a tertiary degree or higher. (The average for Australia, including degrees and diplomas is 9.4% according to Castles 1991a:66.) The profile is certainly much higher than the average for first generation Italians. However it is not an unambiguously middle class sample given the fairly high proportion of parents below the Year 12 level.

5.1.4 Intended Level of Study and Italian

The great majority of the 253 students sampled (85.8%) intended to proceed with further studies, with approximately 25% intending to pursue studies at university, while a few selected TAFE colleges (Table 5.6.)

Level to which students intend to continue	Intend to continue studies % of responses	Intend to continue Italian % of responses
Year 12	12.6%	31.3%
TAFE	10.7%	1.9%
Tertiary Institution	75.1%	10.0%

Table 5.6
Italian set, students' intentions to continue studies

Despite the high proportion of students wanting to continue their studies at university (75.1%), only a very small proportion (10%) signalled the intention to continue studying Italian at university, and a very low 1.9% intended to continue at TAFE. The latter is not surprising given the few courses available at TAFE in languages. However the intention not to continue studies in Italian at higher levels should cause concern among interested educators.

5.1.5 Reasons for Discontinuing Italian

There does not appear to be a clear indication as to why Italian is discontinued (Table 5.7). The most frequently given reason appears to be that other subjects were considered more important, particularly for those students who were

studying Italian as L2. This is not surprising given that they are studying Italian at a less intense level.

Reasons for discontinuing Italian	Students studying Italian as L1 % Response	Students studying Italian as L2 % Response
I do not like languages	8.5%	-
There were too many native speakers	8.9%	7.0%
The subject was too difficult	21.2%	10.5%
My friends did not take this subject	1.9%	1.8%
I did not like the teacher	12.0%	3.5%
Other reasons (open ended response)	16.6%	24.6%
The language was not available	0.8%	1.8%
I considered other subjects more important	21.2%	28.1%
There were time table clashes	3.9%	12.3%

Table 5.7
Italian set, students' reasons for discontinuing Italian

The perceived 'difficulty' of the subject is given equal ranking as a reason for discontinuing (21.2%), but only by the group studying Italian as L1. This may come as a surprise given the generally held view of Italian as an 'easy' language. It is worth noting however that the L2 group did not rank the 'difficult' nature of Italian as a strong reason. A practical reason such as 'timetable clashes' was in fact ranked higher.

Among the other reasons for discontinuing Italian, 'availability' of the subject, and the influence of 'friends not doing the subject', did not appear to play much of a role, whilst the presence of native speakers in the classroom, often cited as a disincentive to other learners, seems to have only a negligible role in this sample. The reason, 'I did not like the teacher', was relatively more significant (12%) for the L1 group, but negligible for the L2 group (3.5%), so it would be difficult to draw unambiguous comments from this sample.

5.1.6 Reasons for Continuing Italian

The questionnaire asked students to rate fifteen statements (Table 5.8) on a five point scale ranging from 'not important' to 'very important'. Thus a rating of five would indicate a very important factor, at least in the perception of the student, in influencing the decision to continue studying Italian. Conversely a rating of one, again in the student's perception, indicates a negligible factor. In this analysis a rating below the median, i.e. 2.5, is judged as a non-committal response. Table 5.8 presents the calculated average for each statement for both L1 and L2 students.

From the students' responses it appears that not all the reasons put forward in the questionnaire played a role in students' decisions to continue Italian after Year 10. Not particularly influential, i.e. with a score below 2, seem to be choice of the subject by friends (statement 14) or that 'other subjects were even less attractive' (statement 15). Advice from the teacher, or liking the teacher (statements 13 and 8) were similarly uninfluential. Most of the reasons proposed by the questionnaire did, however, appear to play a role.

Reasons for continuing study of Italian	Average Rating given by students studying Italian as L1	Average Rating given by students studying Italian as L2
1. Ethnic origin and/or religion	2.76	2.0
2. Contact with the ethnic community in Australia which speaks the language	2.52	2.41
3. Other contact with the country where the language is spoken (past travels, friends, parents, work, etc)	2.32	2.58
4. I thought this would be an easy subject for me	2.29	2.66
5. I had good marks in the past	3.57	3.5
6. I like studying languages	3.45	3.75
7. I like studying about the culture and society of the country where the language is spoken	3.14	3.08
8. I particularly like the teacher	2.16	1.5
9. I do not have definite plans for the future but I feel the language would enhance my future career prospects.	3.69	2.08
10. I have definite plans to work in an area of employment where the language is used.	2.81	2.83
11. I want to travel or live in the country.	3.43	3.66
12. I have been advised to continue by my family	2.74	2.58
13. I have been advised to continue by my teachers	2.41	1.58
14. One or more of my friends are taking the subject	1.6	1.4
15. Although I had no strong desire to continue, other subjects were even less attractive.	1.75	1.58

Table 5.8
Italian set, students' reasons for continuing Italian
Rated from 1 (not important) to 5 (important)

5.1.7 Integrative and Instrumental Reasons

Amongst the most highly rated reasons (in the present discussion those with a rating of 3 or higher), there are both instrumental (study or work-related) and integrative (cultural, affective) reasons chosen by both L1 and L2 groups. Two instrumental reasons had the highest rating in the L1 group. They were statement 9, i.e. students felt Italian would enhance career prospects, and statement 5, i.e. 'good marks', which probably means they felt Italian would help them to succeed in their studies. However the only other statements with rating above 3 in this group expressed intrinsic and integrative reasons. Thus statement 6 relating to the pleasure of studying languages received the third highest ranking in the L1 group, whilst it was attributed the top ranking in the L2 group. The other two statements with high rank (11 and 7 in that order) related to travelling and living in the country (Italy) and wanting to know more about its culture. These two reasons also received high ranking in the L2 groups, with second and fourth place respectively.

It is interesting to note the apparent discrepancy between the two groups with respect to statement 9 (which is instrumental) (Table 5.10). The L1 group gives it the top rank while it is only ranked ninth in the other group. This may be explained by the fact that for the latter, Italian was not the main language they are studying. Presumably the other (main) language was more important for the chosen career. However it is also interesting that the more immediate plans for deployment of language skills (statement 10) had an almost equal and high rating and rank in the two groups.

Integrative reasons for continuing	Average Rating given by students studying Italian as L1		Average Rating given by students studying Italian as L2	
	Rating	Rank	Rating	Rank
2. Contact with the ethnic community in Australia which speaks the language	2.52	9	2.41	8
3. Other contact with the country where the language is spoken (past travels, friends, parents, work, etc)	2.32	11	2.58	7
6. I like studying languages	3.45	3	3.75	1
7. I like studying about the culture and society of the country where the language is spoken	3.14	5	3.08	4
8. I particularly like the teacher	2.16	13	1.5	12
11. I want to travel or live in the country.	3.43	4	3.66	2

Table 5.9
Italian set, students' integrative reasons for continuing Italian
Rated from 1 (not important) to 5 (important)

Instrumental reasons for continuing	Average Rating given by students studying Italian as L1		Average Rating given by students studying Italian as L2	
	Rating	Rank	Rating	Rank
5. I had good marks in the past	3.57	2	3.5	3
4. I thought this would be an easy subject for me	2.29	12	2.66	6
9. I do not have definite plans for the future but I feel the language would enhance my future career prospects.	3.69	1	2.08	9
10. I have definite plans to work in an area of employment where the language is used.	2.81	6	2.83	5

Table 5.10
Italian set, students' instrumental reasons for continuing Italian

An adequate level of success in language studies as measured, for instance, by the fact of having 'had good marks in the past' (statement 5) evidently has a strong role in a student's persistence in studying the language. Indeed with a rank of 2 and 3 across the L1 and L2 groups this was both strong and consistent among the set instrumental reasons (Table 5.10).

Overall, while the integrative reasons were more consistent across the two groups there was a balance of strong instrumental and integrative reasons in both groups which would suggest that strong reasons from both sets are necessary to motivate persistence in language studies.

5.1.8 Students' Self-evaluation

A last question to consider in this motivation study is the student's self-evaluation, a summary of which is given in Table 5.11. Students were asked to rank their own ability in the four macro-skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. If they had ranked themselves at the maximum, the score would have been 20. For the purpose of this analysis any score below 10 is recorded as negative self-evaluation and any score of 10 and above is recorded as positive self-evaluation. Of the students studying Italian, whether as L1 or as L2, 48% gave themselves a positive self-evaluation and 52% a negative one.

A slight majority of students of Italian tend to evaluate their own language ability rather on the 'poor to good' end of the scale rather than in the 'very good

to fluent' end. This probably means that the significant presence of Italian background (second generation) students does not appear to play a strong role in self-perception as 'fluent' users of the language. While it is not clear from the available data whether continuing students presented a systematically different pattern of self-evaluation from discontinuing students, the responses show that self-evaluation appears to have no relationship to the choice of studying Italian as major or as minor language study.

	% giving positive self-evaluation	% giving negative self-evaluation
	%	%
Students studying Italian as L1	48%	52%
Students studying Italian as L2	48%	52%
	Self-ranking	Self-ranking
Average ability L1	12.2	7.3
Average ability L2	13.09	7.3

Table 5.11
Italian set, students' self evaluation

Analysis of this study of student attitudes seems to suggest to the educator, among other things, that a measure of success and achievement especially externally evaluated (e.g. achieving good marks) is a positive factor in a student's decision to continue to study. To the policy-maker the study would likewise suggest that a balanced set of strong integrative and instrumental motivations for language studies (rather than exclusively one or the other set) may help the student choose to study (and continue studying) a language.

5.2 Parents' Attitudes

The school community is generally positive in its attitudes towards language teaching, and probably increasingly so at the time of writing. Di Biase and Dyson (1988:105) report positive perceptions from the early programs in 1982, both from the school community which spoke the language taught in the local school and the wider school community including both parents and teachers. Arguably it would have been impossible for the insertion class program to expand so rapidly and to the extent it did if there had been negative attitudes towards it from parents and school communities in general. This support is very much present also in the secondary school where the language is present to some extent in the scholastic community. Thus in the Melbourne Catholic schools study conducted by Ryan and Petralia (1990:13-14) just over two thirds of nearly 1,000 parents in 44 different schools 'acknowledged the value of studying Italian at secondary school' and gave, among the positive reasons 'Future career opportunities, building on previous studies in the language, language background of the child, communication with relatives, travel', and other reasons, in that order. An interesting observation made in that study is that parents of the younger students (Year 9) tended to be generally more supportive towards Italian and for more integrative reasons (value, beauty, language maintenance in a multicultural society) while the Year 11 parents tended to cite more instrumental reasons.

The parents of the Sydney survey (Abdoolcader, op. cit.) while voting Italian in second position behind Japanese mentioned among the reasons for this choice the fact that Italian is a parental, family and community language, the presence of Italian in feeder schools, available resources in the community and cultural ties.

5.3 Attitudes in the Wider Community

Positive changes of attitudes towards languages are emerging in the wider community also. A good indication of this change comes from the results of a very detailed survey commissioned by the Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) as background data for developing the National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia launched at the end of 1989 by then Prime Minister Hawke (Stefanik 1990:33-39).

The survey results strongly indicate that the first two goals of the National Policy on Languages, which can be summed up as 'English for all' and 'a second language for all', find almost unanimous support right across the sample population. Between 90% and 96% in each of the four groups ('general', 'second generation', 'non-English speaking background' and 'new arrivals') believed it was important or very important that 'All Australians should have the chance to learn English and another language'. While this finding is encouraging, there might have been a different result if the learning of another language had not been posed as part of the same question as the learning of English. The often bewailed monolingual orientation, assumed to be dominant in Australia, can be gauged rather in the way the general and the Australia-born second generation groups view languages when grouped separately from English. Indeed some of the questions asked in the survey group languages in three categories or labels: European languages, Asian languages and thirdly the languages of major cultures found in Australia. Although there are, objectively, large areas of overlap between the groups (e.g. Italian belongs both in the European and the Australian community languages group), the tripartite division is useful because it corresponds, again broadly speaking, to the three more cogently argued reasons for studying languages: the more traditional educational rationale, the instrumental or trade rationale and thirdly the rationale for teaching in schools the languages of the Australian communities. The first two groups of languages found a fairly even, hence ambiguous, distribution of positive and negative answers with the general and new arrivals groups favouring (just marginally over 50%) Asian rather than European languages, while the second generation and NESB groups favoured European rather than Asian languages.

The responses are unambiguously supportive on the question on 'teaching in schools the languages of the Australian communities'. Perhaps surprisingly for some the support is strongest in the second generation (79.7% positive) followed by the new arrivals (76%) and the NESB sample (73%). The general group also showed majority support (at 70.7%) for teaching community languages at school. This can be interpreted as an endorsement of the notion of 'language rights' that had evolved since the mid-1970s (Di Biase and Dyson 1988:16).

Unambiguous support for the idea of a multicultural Australia emerges in the survey in the response to the question whether 'All Australians should be allowed to enjoy their own cultural heritage and share it with others'. The same

pattern of response as with the community languages question emerges here too, but with an even higher majority vote. Indeed there is only a narrow gap here between the 91% tallied by the general group and the 94.5% of the second generation who support the notion.

To conclude this section it can be said that the languages and cultures represented in Australia, and Italian as a major player in this context, have now achieved a degree of acceptance and interest in the community as a whole. This fact, which appears to have been overshadowed by other considerations (Clyne 1991:15-17) in recent policy documents, should be given due recognition in language policy making.

6 POLICIES AND INITIATIVES

In this chapter policy and initiatives at the Commonwealth level and at the level of the States and Territories will be examined, followed by discussion of the initiatives and innovative practices of the Italian Government and the Italo-Australian community. Some of the themes in this chapter, particularly those in relation to Commonwealth policy, have already been touched on in Chapter 2, which gave the historical background. This time however the focus will be on policy development rather than on outcomes.

6.1 National Policies and Initiatives

National policies and initiatives from the 1970s onwards have encouraged the growth of the study of Italian, although recent shifts in policy may have a negative effect on its growth. The Australian Government has had an influential role in the development of language policy and its dissemination, largely through tied funding to the States. It plays this role even though it is not responsible for education under the Constitution.

6.1.1 Policy Development in the 1970s

The role of the Federal Government in encouraging the teaching of Italian (and other community languages) dates from the early 1970s. Prior to this, the Federal Government's policy was that migrants should leave behind their original languages and cultures and assimilate into the 'Australian way of life'. The pressures created by the migration of so many non-English speaking people to Australia during the 1950s and 1960s led to the eclipse of the assimilation policy.

The presence of immigrants in proportions not previously experienced raised important new issues for the education system. Among these was the desire of the parents of Italian and other backgrounds for their children to receive instruction in their language at school. This desire became a demand to governments and education systems during the 1970s based upon the Federal Government's constitutional responsibility for immigration and potential role as an instigator of national changes in education, a role that it began to exercise quite vigorously in the 1970s.

Some early recognition of the justice of migrants' desire and demand for linguistic and cultural recognition came from the Federal Government which was the first to declare, in 1974, that Australia was a multicultural society. This recognition was soon followed by the report of the Committee Inquiring into the Teaching of Migrant Languages in Schools (1975) which took account of many submissions, the majority from ethnic groups or individuals of migrant background. Although the Report recommended that courses in 'migrant languages and cultures' should be widely available in schools, including programs in which migrant children could study their own language, no action was taken at this time by the Federal Government.

Similarly, no action was taken on another Federal Government report which, in the same year (1975), arrived at similar conclusions to the report on the schools. The Report of the *Working Party on Language and Linguistics in Australian Universities* supported the introduction into universities of studies in the languages and cultures of migrants' countries of origin.

A change of government at the Federal level was, it appears, one reason for government inaction on the specific recommendations of these reports. The new government (which remained in office for the rest of the decade and into the early 1980s) did, however, continue the commitment of the previous one to multiculturalism, while taking its own initiatives. The Federal Government, spurred on by the activism of migrant communities, teachers and supporters, continued to provide leadership by its recognition and promotion of multiculturalism and the teaching of community languages. This leadership generated an important climate of support for community languages such as Italian.

In the course of the decade the range of terminology employed to describe languages used by the communities which form part of the Australian social fabric had narrowed to the term 'community languages'. Earlier terms such as 'migrant languages' and 'ethnic languages' had fallen into disuse. However, the term 'community languages' has been defined differently according to the philosophy behind the definition and/or the purposes it needed to serve. For example, to a migrant community such as the Italian community it meant their particular language and others like it which were not represented (or poorly represented) in the schools their children attended. On the other hand to influential linguists such as Clyne it meant '... languages used within the Australian community to emphasise the justification for their continuing existence' (1982:2), a definition which adopts a national as compared with a local community perspective. This is a crucial difference which continues to have significance for policy making in the LOTE/community languages area. Italian can be defined as a community language using either definition, but the local perspective is the most useful one for educational policy, e.g. for defining target groups and objectives.

The focus of languages policy at the Federal level on the special needs resulting from multiculturalism was consistent with the Commonwealth's responsibility for immigration and the Federal bi-partisan policy on multiculturalism. These policies were attempting to address a need which was being inadequately served by the normal resourcing of the education system. These needs had not existed on such a scale prior to post-war mass migration

6.1.2 The Galbally Report and Its Aftermath

Federal Government support for multiculturalism took a concrete form with the publication in 1978 of the *Report of the Review of Post-Arrival Programs and Services* (the Galbally Report). In recommending additional Federal funds, the Galbally Report argued that, 'There is still apathy if not obstruction among some educators to the development of multicultural education ... it can be said that our schools and school systems should be encouraged to develop more rapidly various

initiatives aimed at improving the understanding of the different histories, cultures, languages and attitudes of those who make up our society' (1978:106).

The Commonwealth MEP which continued until 1985 was the vehicle for the Galbally Report's funds for 'multicultural education', a concept which included community languages programs in schools. Experimental and pilot programs were being conducted at the time in primary schools, drawing on local, school and voluntary resources. One of the effects of the MEP was to bring Commonwealth support to these programs. Many schools used MEP funds for innovative programs, bi-lingual programs, production of materials for the teaching of Italian (and other community languages), liaison with the ethnic community, and many other related purposes. Some primary schools (both with and without significant enrolments of students from Italian backgrounds) were able for the first time to employ teachers of Italian, thereby generating a demand for language programs which the limited resources of MEP were not able to satisfy.

In addition to providing a climate of approval, the Federal Government saw its role primarily as stimulating innovation within existing structures rather than providing a permanent source of funds to new structures, as happened, for example, with the establishment of the ESL program.

Of particular importance was the decision to give per capita grants to ethnic schools followed a recommendation of the newly-created Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs (AIMA). These grants were allowed to be used for the teaching of community languages in the established school system, a measure which had a decisive impact on the spread of Italian teaching. As has been seen, from this grew the very large insertion class network, the main goal of which was the teaching of Italian as a second language particularly in the primary school, from which both benefits and problems resulted. From the point of view of the education authorities, the schools did not have direct access to the funds. It was problematic for the education systems and perhaps frustrating for the ordinary day-school to have to introduce language courses through other agencies which, however well intentioned and knowledgeable they may have been in their own field, did not have the responsibility for the educational and administrative policy of the whole school, or the school system. From the point of view of the Commonwealth Government, it was an advantage not to have to set up a permanent and costly provision for on-going community language programs. From the point of view of the community school committees there was one great advantage in their control of the funds: schools which were interested in a community language program, such as Italian, came into close contact with community organisations, who were able to provide those programs through a combination of Commonwealth funding and their own resources, including funding from the Italian Government. The contradictions, however, remained. The Ethnic School Program was allowed to fund courses within the school systems - Government, Catholic and Independent - while at the same time the systems themselves were unable to obtain direct funding for language teaching/learning programs. This led to confusion of roles and expectation both in the communities, particularly the Italian, and in the education systems. This created an invidious and in the long run untenable situation, which the White Paper later attempted to reverse in a somewhat abrupt manner by channelling funds through the systems' authorities.

Another decision coming out of the AIMA Review of the Galbally report was the provision of grants to tertiary institutions for the establishment of community language courses, leading to the wider teaching of Italian, particularly in Colleges of Advanced Education.

In their treatment of language issues, Federal policies emphasised both the role of community language programs for language maintenance and development as well as their role in promoting second language learning and intercultural understanding (ibid.: 106-108). Bipartisan support for multiculturalism seemed to ensure a fairly long-term commitment of (at least the Federal government) towards what were by then recognised as Community Languages, the maintenance and development of language and cultural resources of Australia. These policies were conducive to the growth of courses in Italian which was, after all, the language of a very large community with a high rate of usage of Italian or Italian dialects in the first generation and an even larger second generation moving through the education system. It would seem safe to assume that these policies assisted the language maintenance of students of Italian background, who were able to study their language in the education system. At the same time, given the size and distribution of the Italian community across Australia, the Italian language was accessible to many who were learning it as a second language.

Unfortunately the Commonwealth did not behave consistently: MECC was allowed to run down and disappear, drying up the only resource incentive for the school systems to maintain a certain level of initiative in actual language teaching programs (as against language materials, curriculum, testing or other worthwhile projects).

6.1.3 National Policy on Languages

A new conception of the Commonwealth's role in language policy and provision began to emerge in the early 1980s. There was a concerted effort by linguists, ethnic community groups (especially the Ethnic Communities' Councils) and teachers to demonstrate the need for a National Language Policy. Clyne summarises the motivation behind this campaign in the following terms:

> ... many policies were quite *ad hoc* and piecemeal, with a mismatch between policy formulation and implementation. ... Programs in community languages at primary schools were being developed without the adequate provision of courses in languages at primary teacher training institutions. Programs were starting or stopping according to the availability of teachers (1991:218).

Consequently, one motivation was the need to have a comprehensive policy on languages. Another motivation was the desire to place new demands on the political agenda, thereby broadening the language policy agenda. The most significant of these new demands was that all Australians should be able to learn another language. This second motivation for a National Language Policy had a somewhat different constituency from the multicultural policies discussed thus far. It was supported by language professionals, such as the Australian Federation of Modern Language Teachers Association (AFMLTA) who saw their teaching subjects (chiefly French and German) declining in the education system.

A broader coalition of interests, including Aboriginal and deaf groups, was represented in the ranks of the movement for a National Language Policy

Such a policy reached its first national platform with the inquiry by the Senate, as seen in Chapter 2, whose report, tabled in 1984, established the following four guiding principles:

- competence in English;
- maintenance and development of languages other than English;
- provision of services in languages other than English;
- opportunities for learning second languages (Senate 1984:224).

The Federal Government, responding to pressure from the coalition promoting a National Language Policy (Clyne 1991:227), gave Joseph Lo Bianco the task of producing a policy. His work, the National Policy on Languages (NPL), tabled in 1987 and adopted by the Government, continued the broad and comprehensive thrust on language issues of the Senate Committee report.

In taking a broad approach to language issues, the NPL was entering into areas where the Federal Government had previously not ventured, or where it had taken only small initiatives. The NPL set out new needs, as well as the more familiar one of language maintenance, all of which it considered the Commonwealth should urgently address:

> Almost half of all Australian school students never study a language other than English at any time during their schooling. Fewer than 12% of students matriculate with a language other than English.
>
> Non-English speaking background Australian students have very limited opportunities for studying the language of their homes and with which their families identify in regular school programs. The languages of major importance to Australia's geographical and economic relations with its neighbours tend to be relatively poorly represented in overall offerings of second languages (Lo Bianco 1987:120).

The Federal Government responded positively to the NPL agenda seeing languages as an area that had not been given sufficient encouragement and which required special Commonwealth assistance.

While reaffirming the value of Australia's multilingualism, the policy aimed to normalise it by portraying it as a national resource which could serve general national interests such as economic development. It reiterated the dual themes from the Senate report of the 'maintenance and development of languages other than English' and 'opportunities for learning second languages', but both were subsumed under the principle of 'a language other than English for all' (op. cit.: 120-160). This indicated a shift in policy emphasis towards the learning of languages by those who did not already have another language, a shift that was reinforced by the labelling of the funded program which issued from the NPL as the Australian Second Language Learning Program.

This shift was also evident in the decision to nominate nine languages as the languages of wider teaching: Mandarin Chinese, Indonesian/Malay, Japanese, French, German, Italian, Modern Greek, Arabic and Spanish. The NPL rationale for this approach was that,

> This group of languages includes languages of importance to Australia for external and national reasons, although some of these languages overlap

> with languages widely spoken in Australia. The term "languages of wider teaching" ... can be taken to mean that at a national level these languages warrant promotion over and above specific support for other languages ... (op. cit.: 125).

In this way, Italian along with other languages, such as Modern Greek, Spanish and Arabic, were ascribed a higher status. The strength of Italian as a community language (both within the education system and generally) was a major factor for its inclusion in this group.

The NPL also contributed to changing the image of Italian from a language primarily of interest to the children of migrants to being, as well, a language of cultural and economic importance which non-Italian children and their parents could choose as a second language. This new approach Italian paralleled the arrival of Italy on the world economic stage during the 1980s.

The attention Italian received during the early days of the National Policy on Languages was substantial because it had been identified (along with Modern Greek) as warranting 'special attention', a category which attracted the highest level of assistance (ibid.). Through the Australian Second Languages Learning Program, a total of $23.4 million was distributed over the period 1988-1992 (Dixon and Martin 1990:5). There is no way of determining how much was spent on Italian, but according to AACLAME (1990:91-100), some of the funded activities include:

- an Italian curriculum grant to the Victorian Government schools;
- the evaluation of ACT Government Italian primary programs;
- the development of Italian teaching materials by the Victorian, ACT. and South Australia non-government sectors;
- continuity of Italian primary and secondary Government programs in NSW;
- bilingual programs in Victorian and Western Australia Government schools;
- professional development programs in Victorian Government schools;
- resources for teaching Italian in the distance mode by the South Australian Department of Education.

Despite these undeniable achievements, the very emphasis of the program on second language learning by definition marginalises children of Italian background for whom Italian, or a variety of it, is their mother tongue. This would suggest that the program has done little directly to promote the maintenance of Italian in the Australian context.

The assistance Italian received was then, primarily, in terms of infrastructure (e.g. for curriculum, professional development) or co-ordination, rather than an increase in programs in schools or universities. This emphasis is characteristic of the thrust of the NPL, which also directed resources to the creation of a Languages Institute of Australia (later to become NLLIA) whose charter paralleled the principles of the NPL. The Institute established language research and development centres attached to universities, some of which are doing work aimed at improving the quality of Italian teaching e.g. researching the learning of Italian as a second language, instruments for testing Italian, improving Italian teachers' professional qualifications and so forth.

6.1.4 The White Paper

The shift of the Commonwealth's language agenda away from a focus on multiculturalism and towards broader national interests (such as international trade), which began with the NPL, became even more pronounced at the next stage in policy development. This was the build up to and release of the Federal Government's White Paper, *Australia's Language: The Australian Language and Literacy Policy*. By the time of its release in 1991, economic imperatives were well and truly dominating national policy making, including in the languages area. The perception in the field was that the case for Asian and trade languages, which was generally held to be justified, was being 'often presented in an unbalanced way' (Gobbo 1988: 179) and that resources for languages as a whole were being increasingly diverted to Asian languages both in schools and universities (ibid.).

Consequently, while continuing the policy of priority languages, the White Paper reserved its strongest support for Asian languages, particularly Japanese. The White Paper listed fourteen languages (including Italian) and allowed the States to choose their own eight priority languages, a mechanism which moved this choice from the Commonwealth (as in the NPL) to the States. Only (regional) international considerations were drawn to the attention of the States as they made their choice:

> In determining the languages to receive priority, systems should consider the benefits of ensuring Australia has the linguistic capacity to deal effectively with changing relationships in Asia, the Middle East and the Pacific Rim (DEET 1991 *Companion Volume*: 76).

The White Paper effectively dismissed the community or maintenance rationale for studying a language. Although it pointed out that education systems would continue to support other languages (op. cit.: 77), it would appear, even at this early stage, that Italian will be adversely affected by a narrow application of economic rationalism to the language policy area.

The significant initiative of the White Paper that affects fundamentally the relationship between the communities and the school system is the decision to mainstream ESP funds, including funds for insertion classes 'to improve the quality of provision under this Program' (op. cit.: 16). This was done without the due process of review as to what problems there may have been with the model and without setting up a transition process which would give concerned parties a meeting ground and a role in what should be in the common interest. The danger may well be that, in the process, which appears to be unilaterally and heavily skewed towards system authorities, much of the good work done in the 1980s will be undermined. In State governments may not be able to retain a comparable number of language programs in the schools. This may lead to a decline in the numbers of primary school students studying Italian and to the withdrawal of the community-based organisations from the schools, back into the after-hours area. The benefit of the resources coming from the Italian Government may then not flow into the schools but remain outside them.

The White Paper (DEET 1991) is inconsistent in regard to language maintenance. On the one hand it identified, correctly, the disincentives to language learning arising from a lack of recognition of the students' background. 'If native speaking and non-native speaking students undertake the same course marked differences

in learning will emerge. Advanced students may become bored; newer students may be intimidated'. It also recognised the fact that 'being a native speaker of a language or having a family background in it are in fact very powerful incentives for effective language learning' (Companion Vol.:72). On the other hand it underestimated the contribution of CLB students to maintaining numbers in language studies, both their own and other languages. The statement that 'the majority of people ... have no background in the language being studied and, when they start learning, are effectively "second language" or "new" learners', (ibid.: 74) apart from its circularity does not in itself, add much to understanding why an even greater majority never does take up such study.

Another unsatisfactory aspects of the White Paper was that it funded second language programs within schools, but did not fund language maintenance initiatives within schools. The White Paper recommended for the ESP a 30% increase which would be absorbed by the administrative cost attached to the new funding arrangements.

The White Paper's major initiative in the languages area targeted language learning in the final year of secondary schooling. It expressed concern about the declining proportion of languages students at this level: 'In the 1960s, about 40% of final year school students studied a language other than English. Today fewer than 12% of Year 12 students do so, and many of these are native speakers of the language.' To reverse this trend '... the Commonwealth proposes that the proportion of Year 12 students studying a language other than English should be increased to 25% nationally by the year 2000'. In order to encourage this, the Federal Government would provide an annual grant of $300 for each Year 12 student who completes a senior secondary course in one of the eight priority languages of their State (op. cit.: 17-18).

What effect will this have on Italian? This has yet to be seen, but it would be surprising if it turned out to be positive. At this stage all that can be detected is a gradual downturn in the number of students of Italian in Year 12. The White Paper's specific aim of increasing the number of Year 12 students studying languages was contradicted by the policy's narrowing of the rationale (and therefore the resourcing) for language learning to economic and, at best, regional (Asia-Pacific) aims. A trend similar to the Commonwealth one is emerging in these States (cf. Queensland and NSW below) where the economic/regional approach is strongly embraced.

Despite the expressed level of concern about the paltry number of languages students, when it comes to resources the emphasis disappears. In fact the total funding allocation for LOTEs and Aboriginal literacy and languages remained pegged to around 10% of the Australian Language and Literacy Policy (ALLP) funding package for the period 1990-94 (White Paper 1991:25).

Sufficient funds must be made available for the further development of Italian programs, guaranteed long-term, not just from year to year as is the current situation. Developments, however, need to build on the experience already accumulated. This means encouraging teachers and linguists to describe and reflect on current programs and measure outcomes, both in socio-cultural and linguistic terms. Teachers also need to have a more secure employment basis in order to develop professionally. In this context a doubling of the current Commonwealth per-capita provision would appear necessary.

Community based organisations have done an excellent job and must be allowed to continue to do so because they are able to maintain links with the Italian community in a way no large bureaucracy could possibly do and at much less cost. This means that provision for representation of such organisations on advisory, planning and implementation committees needs to be made.

6.2 State Policies and Initiatives

The relationship between Federal and State language policies is not hierarchical nor uniform across Australia.

State	Speak Italian at home (1986)	Primary (1991)	Secondary (1991)	Year 12 HSC (1991)	Priority Language Status of Italian (1993)	Other significant policies#	Presence in Universities (1992)
NSW	113,203	42,482	10,066	757	Yes + other 11 Languages	1-2 hrs/wk primary 2-4 hrs/wk secondary 30 Languages taught Compulsory 100 hrs min.	5 (+Aust. Catholic University)
Vic	178,097	89,520	42,460	752	Yes + 7 other Languages	1.5-4.5 hrs/wk primary 2-3 hrs/wk secondary 43 Languages taught	7 (+Aust. Catholic University)
Qld	26,115	19,225	2,415	180	No 5 other Languages	Italian 'supported' (+ Spanish, Vietnamese) 12 Languages taught Maybe compulsory Yr 5-10	3
WA	43,590	26,283	9,922	396	Yes + 9 other Languages	1 hr/wk min. primary 4 hrs/wk senior secondary 26 Languages taught	3
SA	48,179	17,648	6,419	335	No priorities Italian is one of the Languages of Wider Teaching	By 1995 Languages in every primary 1.5 hrs/wk primary 3-4 hrs/wk secondary 32 Languages taught	3
Tas	1,590	787	786	77	+Shortlisted with Indonesian, Japanese, French, German, Mandarin Chinese	1.5 hrs/wk primary 4-5 hrs/wk senior secondary 7 Languages taught	1
NT	1,040	320	396	*	Yes + 7 other Languages	43 Languages taught in and out of mainstream 2 hrs/wk Yr 6-7 4 hrs/wk secondary	1
ACT	3,951	2,471	870	77	Yes + 7 other Languages	1.5 hrs/wk primary 2-4 hrs/wk secondary 21 + Languages taught	1
Total	415,765	198,736	73,334	2,574 [2,444 (1992)]	6 States: Yes 1 State: No 1 Not Applicable		25 out of 36 Universities

Table 6.1
Italian in Australian education: a State by State overview
 # From Nicholas et al. (1993), and Overview of Key Areas of State Policies (NLLIA)
** Counted with South Australia*
+ Section 6.2.5.1 Italian in Tasmania: Policy

While the Commonwealth plays a more direct and even interventionist role in the tertiary sector, primary and secondary school levels are the responsibilities of the States, and this is the case in the languages area as well. Some States

have been more forward looking than others and have occasionally moved ahead of the Commonwealth in policy development. Implementation of policies requires, however, Federal blessing and funds. The interaction has resulted in an interesting and sometimes intriguing range of situations which are summarised in Table 6.1 and further examined, State by State, in this section.

6.2.1 New South Wales

Multicultural policy arrived in NSW, the State with the highest number of people of non-English speaking backgrounds, in the late 1970s. It was officially launched with the publication and implementation of the Ethnic Affairs Commission's, *Participation: Report to the Premier* (Totaro et al. 1978). The activism of migrant communities in NSW, seeking the teaching of their languages in the schools their children attended, had finally found a receptive ear.

After experimentation and a widening of community language learning opportunities through the Commonwealth's Multicultural Education Program, a permanent program for teaching community languages in the primary school was introduced in 1981. Italian was one of the languages taught, with nine teachers teaching in thirteen programs by 1982. The program was gradually increased during the 1980s such that by 1991 there were 19 teachers teaching Italian in 21 programs. By 1988 the total number of specialist teachers working in this program was 90. The policy stipulated two hours as the minimum time allocation per week for each child in the program.

Since language maintenance was a priority of this program, it could be assumed that it assisted to some extent in language maintenance and development, even though only 18% of the children were of Italian background (Di Biase and Dyson 1988:56-58). Second language learning was also encouraged, especially among students of non-Italian background who attended schools in areas where Italian was a community language.

Paralleling the introduction of Italian into the NSW primary school was its dramatic rise in NSW secondary schools during the 1970s and 1980s. This growth may have been fostered by multicultural education and community language policies issued by the NSW Department of Education, e.g. *Multicultural Education Policy Statement* and the support document, *Community Language Education*, (1983). But Italian, like other community languages in the secondary school, grew primarily because of client demand and became an established offering in NSW secondary schools (cf. Croft & MacPherson 1991a:55 & 1991b:89).

The staffing initiative taken in the primary schools was not matched in the secondary schools. This had consequences for the transition from primary to secondary sectors. Instead, the government chose to satisfy some of the unmet demand by opening the Saturday School of Community Languages in 1978. The growth of overall enrolments in the Saturday School was typically strong and persistent while Italian has had a pattern of stable enrolments (around 300) rather than growth (NSW Ministry 1988:59).

NSW responded to the National Policy on Languages in its *State Language Policy Report* (NSW Ministry 1988). The policy adopted the spirit of the NPL and recommended a number of 'priority languages' (including Italian), but went further by recommending special support to a core of six trade and Asian-Pacific languages (not including Italian). It recommended that schools teaching Italian (along with other community and traditionally-taught languages) be assisted to maintain these languages 'subject to demand and the availability of resources' (op. cit.: 9).

Of importance to languages generally, including Italian, was the recommendation that all schools introduce the study of a LOTE for one hundred hours in Year 7 by 1993 and that high schools be encouraged to identify themselves as centres of excellence for languages study (op. cit.: 10-11). A range of other recommendations was made aimed at improving the quality of language teaching, such as the development of curriculum resources, syllabuses and teacher exchanges with countries where the priority languages were spoken. In the primary school, the Report wished a shift to occur away from the existing one on community languages towards LOTEs in general (a change which so far has not occurred).

Endorsement for these recommendations came with the release of the NSW Government's White Paper *Excellence and Equity: New South Wales Curriculum Reform* according to which 'the study of languages will be designated an integral and essential part of the curriculum' (NSW Ministry 1989). It went further than the State Language Policy on this issue:

> While the Government schools system will be encouraged to phase in implementation from 1991, the study of a language for one year (around 100 hours) will become mandatory for the School Certificate for the 1996 Year 7 cohort (that is, for the 1999 School Certificate) (1989:42-43).

The earlier recommendations on priority languages were also implemented and the Government also established languages high schools which aimed to provide special opportunities for the study of languages.

Both of the main recommendations, i.e. that languages are an essential part of the curriculum and must be studied for a mandatory one hundred hours for the School Certificate, are welcome measures since languages have not featured prominently in the State and were possibly at risk as a subject area. At the School Certificate level, after a short lived growth spurt in 1987, languages were decreasing as shown in Figure 6.1 below.

After 1989 the slide in the proportion of students taking languages at Year 10 appears to have been stemmed and there are encouraging signs that they have been picking up in the last couple of years although it is still below the 1986-87 levels.

Italian, on the other hand appears to have a slightly different pattern as it continued to grow up to 1989 (as a proportion of all LOTE students). It has however decreased slightly over the last two years in the School Certificate as a whole. Its overall position appears to be reasonably stable at this level of the secondary school, the number of students in 1992 for instance is still above the 1986 level.

This is not the case in the senior secondary, however, where Italian, like other major European languages in the HSC has been experiencing a decrease since 1989 which has taken it below 1986 levels. Yet the slide has not been as dramatic as in French and German (Figure 6.2) and may have affected more the 2 Unit Z candidature (usually students who begin Italian at Year 11) than its more traditional 2 and 3 Unit candidature.

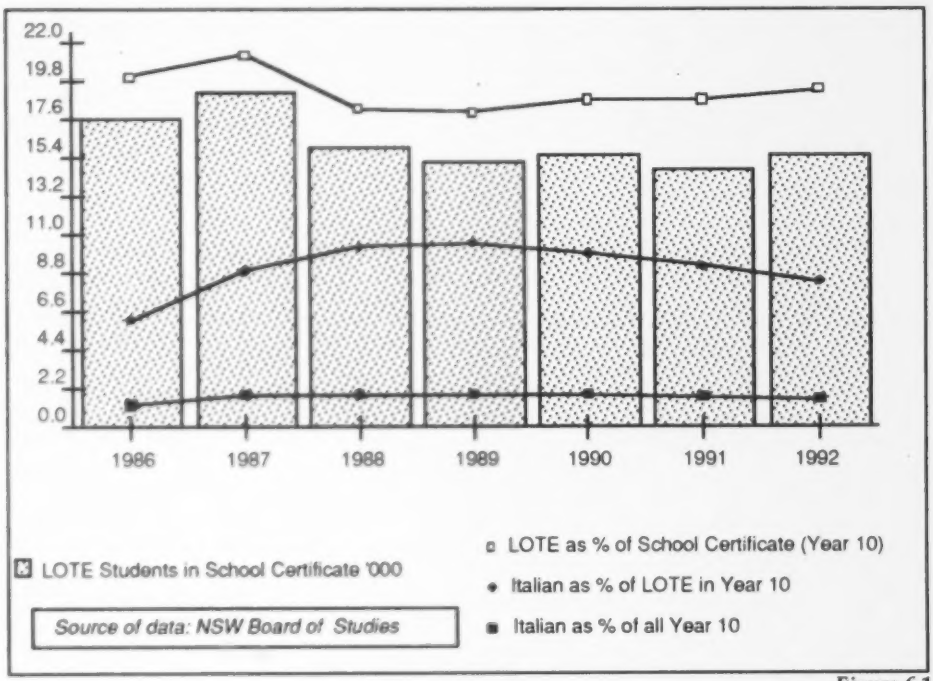

Figure 6.1
NSW Languages in the School Certificate (Year 10) 1986 - 1992

The drop in the major European languages coincides, in NSW, with a steep increase in the number of students of Japanese, as illustrated in figure 6.2. Japanese is the most promoted language in the State with some regions doing so in an unprecedented manner. The Hunter Region for instance has doubled the number of high schools offering Japanese, so that now 'Japanese is being taught in all but one of our [Region] forty-one high schools. Numerous links between sister schools are also being developed and an immersion centre for Japanese has been established' (Hughes 1992).

Hence Japanese is now the language with the second largest number of Year 12 students having passed German and Italian between 1990 and 1991. While the NSW achievement in Japanese should be appreciated, it also raises a number of questions as to its viability over time (especially in view of the issue of teachers' supply and qualifications) but, most pointedly, to the fact that this gain is predicated on the loss occurring in other languages. In other words, the increase occurring in Japanese and, to a much smaller extent, other Asian languages, is insufficient to compensate for the loss to LOTE as a whole. This fact is illustrated in Figure 6.3 below which shows a decrease both in the proportion and the number of Year 12 students in languages despite the gains in Japanese and Chinese

and also despite the success of the efforts made to increase retention rates in the senior secondary school.

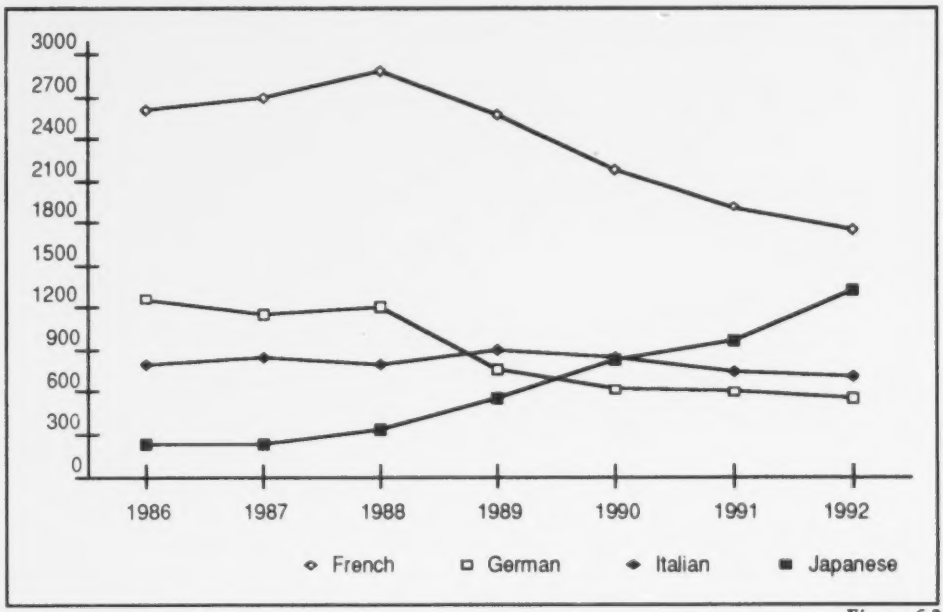

Figure 6.2
NSW HSC Students in Italian and Selected Languages 1986 - 1992
Source: NSW Board of Studies

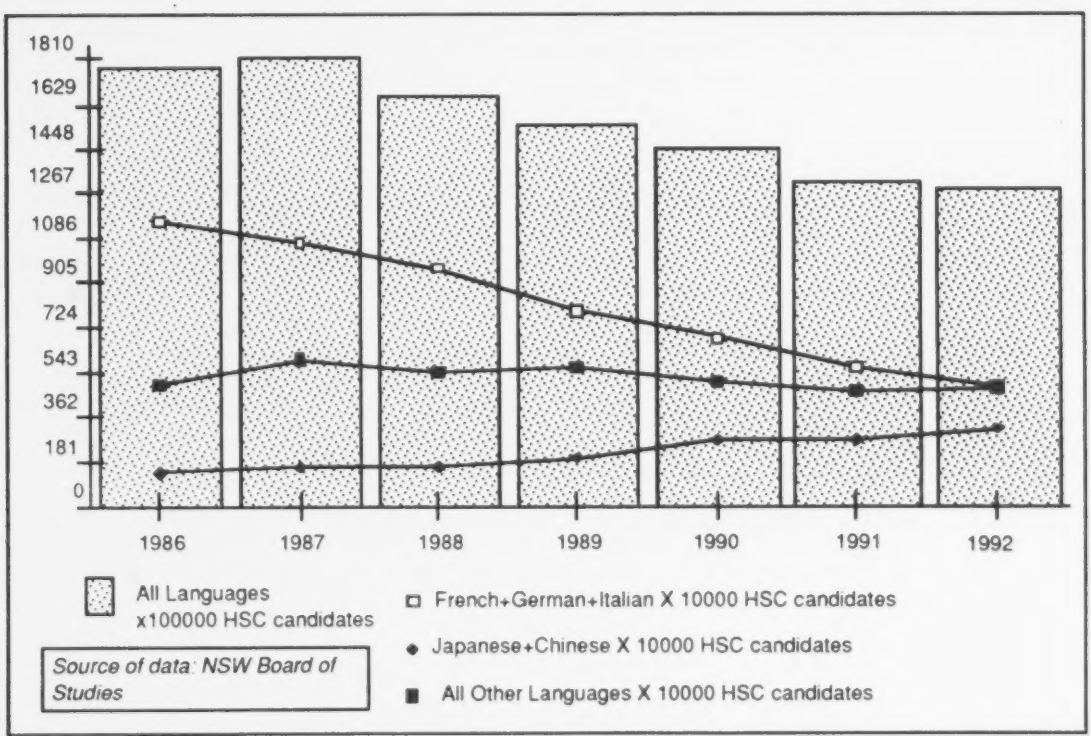

Figure 6.3
NSW Languages in the HSC 1986 - 1992

This means that the Federal and NSW policy to increase the share of students taking Asian languages is, indeed, having the effect of increasing precisely that number, but it is also quite clearly having the unintended consequence of driving some students (and teachers) out of the languages area altogether as they may feel that, if they are not in a particular Asian language, their chosen language is not valued and is therefore abandoned. If this hypothesis is correct, it would warrant immediate investigation and action. Among the questions to be investigated would be why no 'new' students are being brought into languages (i.e. those who would in the past have not undertaken language studies). Why is it that the same number (actually a smaller number) of languages students just appear to be redistributed in a different way?

Nevertheless there has been a remarkable range of initiatives which should not be underestimated. These include the 'languages continuity program', a number of professional development programs for LOTE teachers, the establishment of the Ethnic Schools Board and also an effort in policy rewriting which should not be underestimated. The newest version of the language policies of this State, the NSW Department of School Education's *Strategic Plan for Languages Other Than English* (1992), attempts to map out the State's languages education into the next century. The 100 hour LOTE requirement for Years 7 to 10 targeted by 1996 is to double to 200 hours by the year 2000. By this time one quarter of all HSC candidates is expected to be studying a foreign language and half of all language students will be studying one of the priority Asian and Pacific languages. It is to be hoped, in light of the above, that the total number of HSC candidates in languages will also increase.

6.2.1.1 The Exemplar Language Continuity Program in NSW - The Prairiewood Cluster Italian Experience[7]

Nearly five hundred Year 5 and 6 students at Horsley Park, Smithfield West and William Stimson Primary Schools take part in the Exemplar Language Continuity Program (ELCP) co-ordinated by Prairiewood High School. This Program was one of 11 in NSW and the only one in the Metropolitan South West Region. Originally the ELCP was funded under the NPL, but this funding was terminated in 1991. In 1992, a 1.0 staffing allocation from Region was given to the Cluster for the ELCP 1992 operation. Smithfield West and William Stimson Public Schools each added 0.1 and Prairiewood High School 0.2 from their staffing allocation.

The program complements work dealt with by the primary classroom teacher. The primary students learn some of their normal school work in Italian, e.g. health, social studies, poetry, music, art and drama. Italian was chosen because of its large community presence and because the high school has a number of specialist Italian teachers to allow for continuity of the language in Years 7 to 12.

7 by T. Gandlgruber, Head of Languages and F. Harmer, Principal, Prairiewood High School, NSW

What makes this program special?
Languages are often taught in the primary school but not necessarily in such a co-ordinated manner. Under ELCP students entering High School at Prairiewood can continue Italian at an advanced level with programs designed to develop skills acquired in the primary school. Students have the opportunity to continue their study of Italian not only in language classes but in other disciplines. This cross-curricular immersion and accelerated learning program actively calls on the expertise of staff from non-language areas. In 1991 Year 7 students had the opportunity to extend proficiency through one period of science, home science and textiles taught in Italian. In 1992 this program was extended to art and music.

It is common acceptance that the earlier the language study is undertaken, the more successful the outcomes. Primary school students are very enthusiastic and enjoy their language study immensely, attested to by their linguistic performance, participation and work. At high school they are able to build on what they have learned. The program produces language learners of an excellent standard. When these students reach senior years it is expected that an increased number will undertake language courses. Through the success of the Exemplar Program, the study of the Italian language is compulsory at Prairiewood High School in Years 7 to 10.

Reasons for the success of the program
1. The Principals of the three primary schools and the high school involved are very supportive, and see two major benefits: students have a head start in language learning, and their transition into high school is eased.

2. Support language continuity teachers (experienced language teachers) maintain student interest through their commitment and enthusiasm, developing challenging and enjoyable programs and activities.

3. The primary classroom teachers have been supportive and assisted wherever possible. Classrooms bear evidence of the importance placed upon this program and the teacher/pupil involvement and commitment. Teachers attend professional development in-services in order to become more effective team teachers in the Language classroom. These teachers have assisted at language days by their involvement in language based activities.

4. The language teachers at Prairiewood High School have organised activities between the high school and primary school, e.g. language days, Year 10 and 11 elective students teaching primary classes. They have supported the activities of the exemplar teachers and have developed comprehensive and challenging programs to cater for the accelerated learners and the immersion classes.

5. Greater community awareness and community support is evident as a result of the ELCP Program. Local community groups, such as sports associations, cultural groups and ethnic business houses have actively associated themselves with the program. The Italian Embassy in Canberra has contributed significantly to the program.

6. At tertiary level, strong links have been effected with the University of Western Sydney. Prairiewood is a mentor school for the Languages Department and provides teaching practicum opportunities and research facilities. This year, the ELCP programme will be trialling a new language teaching

methodology currently being used in Canada. The University of Western Sydney, through the Innovative Languages Other Than English program (ILOTES), has targeted our schools because of the excellent work and results being achieved.

7. Through the ELCP and High School, we are strongly represented on the Macarthur Liaison Group, established in 1991 with the aim of linking language study across primary, secondary and tertiary level.

The Exemplar Language Continuity Program has many demonstrable advantages and benefits to the students, particularly the early development of language skills, leading to greater proficiency through accelerated learning and increased performance.

The Minister for Education, Mrs Chadwick, expressed her belief that every public school student from Kindergarten to Year 12 will have to study a LOTE by the end of the first decade next century because 'It is vital our students are prepared for a world that is rapidly changing, one where speaking a second language is essential' (*Sydney Morning Herald* 26 September 1992).

As earlier recommended by the State Language Policy, the plan includes the design, by 1993, of a new syllabus for each of the priority languages, a retraining and professional development program for teachers and an official body, in the form of a ministerial advisory committee, to monitor the implementation of the plan. The latter is already in place. Italian is one of the twelve priority languages designated by NSW, but it is not one of the six (Mandarin Chinese, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, Russian and Spanish) languages scheduled to receive special support in order to increase availability.

6.2.2 Victoria

As the State with the highest proportion of people of non-English speaking background, Victoria's experience with policy and initiatives in languages very much parallels that of NSW. Victoria rejected assimilation as an education policy in the early 1970s and cultivated a vigorous policy of multicultural education, community languages and bilingual education. As in NSW, the Multicultural Education Program was followed closely by a State-funded initiative in community languages in the primary school. The program in community languages that the Government started in 1983 quickly expanded. By 1985 there were 46 Italian community language programs and one Italian-English bilingual program operating in Victoria, out of a total of 128 (Di Biase and Dyson 1988:49). By 1991 the number of supernumerary teachers teaching LOTE in the primary school had risen to 200.5 (Victoria Ministry 1991c).

This program targeted community languages and, although this policy emphasis was supported by the release of the discussion paper *The Place of Community Languages in Victorian Schools*, Victoria quickly moved to the more general position of promoting language learning for all students. This was first enunciated in a Ministerial Policy Statement on Curriculum (1984) (Clyne 1991:224). It was soon followed by the policy document *The Place of Languages other than English in Victorian Schools*, which proposed that 'by the Year 2000 a continued study in one or more languages becomes part of the normal educational

experience of all children' (Ministerial Advisory Committee 1985:12). It set a policy framework for the other issues relevant to a major expansion of LOTE study, such as teacher supply and curriculum materials. It also specified that children in a primary school program should study the language for no less than three hours per week.

An implementation strategy plan, *Victoria Languages Action Plan*, (Lo Bianco 1989) followed this policy statement. In the long to medium term it considers that 'Every school should offer at least one LOTE and every student should study at least one during their compulsory school years (P-10)' (op. cit.: 73). Secondary students should also be encouraged to continue this study into the post-compulsory years. Language maintenance opportunities should be available to students with a community language (although this may be after school hours) as should continuity between primary and secondary school language programs wherever possible. The Plan recommends that 'hub schools' be set up to encourage language specialisation at the secondary level. It also very strongly supports bilingual (including immersion) programs.

Like the NPL, the Plan identifies a number of languages of wider teaching and Italian is included among them because of its 'key national or domestic importance' (op. cit.: 74). A balanced approach is taken to the selection of the languages of wider teaching, with the selected community languages receiving equal weighting with languages of major global importance and major regional importance. The Plan did make some short term goals, which included the allocation of additional resources to the LOTE area. It would seem that the policy of key languages was applied to the new primary supernumerary staff, thereby indicating a shift from what had previously been a community language program to a LOTE (languages of wider teaching) program.

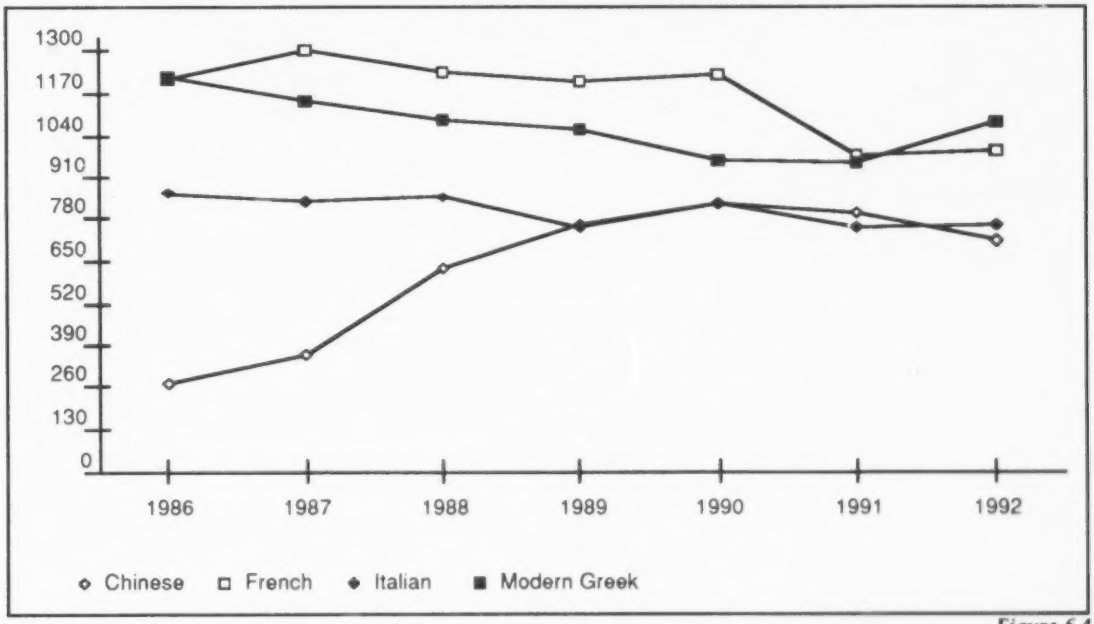

Figure 6.4
Major four Year 12 Languages Victoria 1986 - 1992

The results of the more balanced approach taken in Victoria can be appreciated in the less dramatic changes, as compared with NSW for instance, in the major Year 12 languages over the last five or six years (Figure 6.4). Thus the Asian language that has increased has been Chinese (which also has a solid community base), the slide in French is not particularly dramatic nor is it constant, Modern Greek is strongly represented and in good health and Italian, which has traditionally been weakly represented at this level (in comparison with its strength in the community), is nevertheless in a fairly stable third position in 1992.

What is being achieved in Victoria is, therefore, a well balanced development of languages resources with reasonable shares of the language candidature, as Figure 6.5 shows, in a total framework of gradual but almost constant increase of the number of Year 12 languages students (about 1,300 more students since 1986) in a broad range of languages.

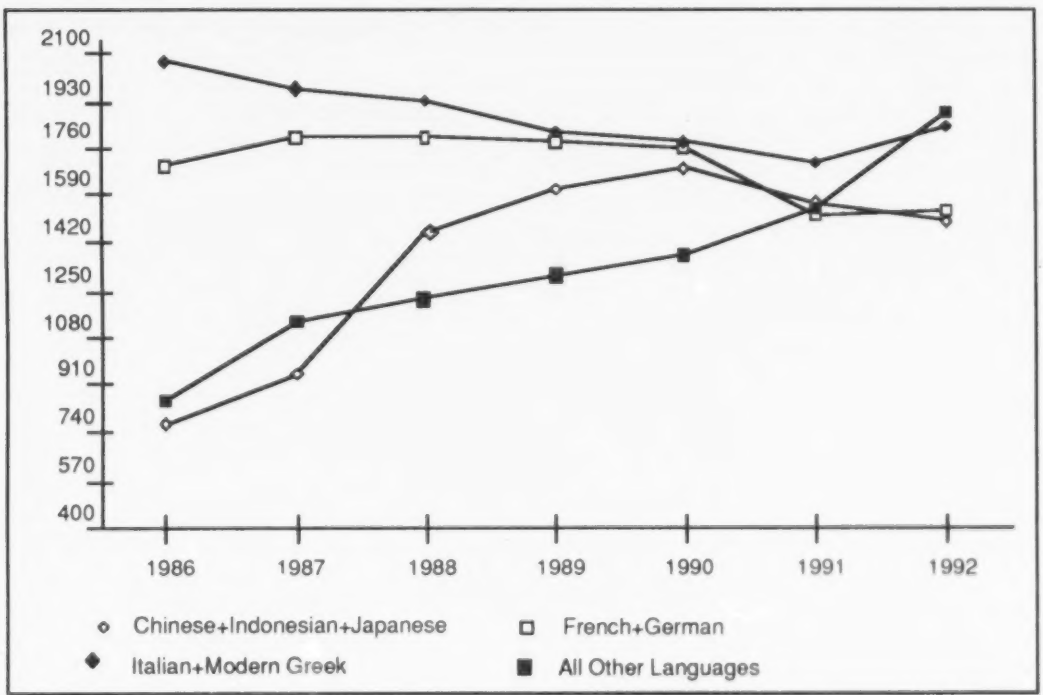

Figure 6.5
Year 12 Languages in Victoria 1986 - 1992

Some other policy and research documents have been released since the Languages Action Plan. One of these is *Languages other than English in Government Schools 1991* which was produced by the Department of School Education to provide information on LOTE (Victoria Ministry 1991a). Another, from the Ministry of Education and Training, is the *Draft Report of the Review of the Victorian School of Languages* (Victoria Ministry 1991b). Of most significance, however, is the document *Implementing the Minister's Languages Other Than English (LOTE) Policy* (Victoria Ministry 1991c), which quotes the then Minister for Education and Training as saying 'There has been significant growth in the teaching of languages in Victoria, however, there is still a falling

away in the study of a second language from the middle years of secondary school.'

The Government wants to reverse this trend by making the study of LOTEs available to all students in Victorian Government primary schools and making the study of a second language a required study for all students in Years 7-10. This will begin in 1992 when all secondary schools will be required to make a second language a core study for all students in Year 7 (ibid.: 1).

This statement has a number of significant aspects. Firstly, a date (1992) is specified for the implementation of core 'second language' study in Year 7, with an unspecified commitment being made to the staged implementation of compulsory and/or available LOTE provision at all other levels. Secondly, reference is made to the widespread tendency for middle and senior secondary students to drop languages that they had previously been studying, a problem which has been particularly marked in Victoria, including in Italian. It is important to note that in discussing the issue of participation rates in languages, the document describes Year 12 numbers as declining whereas the information provided is, in fact, proportions (1987: 3.82% and 1989: 3.66% of Year 12 enrolments. It would seem therefore that numbers are not declining although proportions are.

A third issue raised by the document is that 'The possibility of altering current arrangements for supernumerary primary LOTE allocations ... is being explored', including 'the devolution of allocations to regions so that they can staff and support schools on a district rather than an individual schools basis' (ibid.: 4). This tendency towards devolution of what have been, up to now, centrally allocated resources, is an important one. It raises the question of how to ensure that these resources continue to be spent on the teaching of languages and not some other priority of regions and perhaps schools.

There are many other worthwhile initiatives described in the document e.g. subject-based LOTE materials in Italian and other languages are going to be developed (ibid.: 4). A significant omission must, however, be mentioned. There is no mention in the document of the languages of wider teaching on which Victoria wishes to concentrate its energy. There is only a reference that regional plans will 'Nominate languages for major development in districts and clusters' (ibid.: 5).

Neither is any mention of languages of wider teaching made in the pamphlet by the Schools Programs Division, Department of School Education, *Implementing Government Policy - Languages Other Than English* (1991d). 'Priority languages' are only referred to in relation to the Commonwealth Priority Languages Incentive Program. Sensibly, the languages nominated for major support from the Commonwealth are those with the highest Year 12 enrolments, a group which naturally includes Italian.

It would seem that the Victorian Government has simply side-stepped the unworkable policy of concentrating on certain languages of wider teaching in its most recent policy formulation. Instead it apparently is focusing its energy on improving the provision of language learning generally (and perhaps has found that the priority language policy has the opposite effect). It will be interesting

to see if this approach is persisted with by the Liberal government of Victoria elected in 1992.

6.2.3 South Australia

South Australia's long history of teaching languages has been referred to in other places (Clyne 1982, Di Biase and Dyson 1988:37-41, and *Linking People Through Languages* South Australia 1991:42-46).

In the early 1980s South Australia developed a number of language policies which, like the Victorian document (Ministerial Advisory Committee 1985) in some ways predated the thrust of the NPL. *Voices for the Future* (South Australia 1983) and the *Languages Policy* (South Australia 1985) presented an innovative and comprehensive framework for languages teaching e.g. the establishment of school clusters to facilitate continuity from primary to secondary programs, support for the professional development of teachers, and an emphasis on communication objectives in teaching (Di Biase and Dyson, op. cit.: 39).

Following in the footsteps of *Voices for the Future*, the *Languages Policy* took as its major concern the expansion of language learning opportunities to all children. Unlike the later policies on core language learning in NSW and Victoria, The *Languages Policy* of SA targeted the primary school:

> By 1995 all students in primary schools will be learning a language other than English as part of their formal education. In secondary schools all students will have access to the study of a language other than English (Quoted in South Australia op. cit.: 3).

While widespread second language learning has received strong support from the South Australian government authorities, due recognition has also been given more or less consistently to language maintenance. Early in the piece, the enlightened report *Education for Cultural Democracy* (South Australia 1984 - Smolicz Report) formulated some educational principles, including:

> All individuals have the right to an education which supports their participation and development in their own and other ethnic, cultural and linguistic communities (op. cit.: 12).

The enduring influence of this report is shown by the prime place it is given in the policy section of *Linking People Through Languages* (op. cit.). Language maintenance and multiculturalism are strongly endorsed in *Linking People*, a comprehensive document which was jointly produced by the Education Department of South Australia, the South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools and the Multicultural Education Co-ordinating Committee. It synthesises, in a refreshing manner, current initiatives in the LOTE area in South Australia. It presents, for example, information about the types of LOTE programs (second language, mother tongue development and bilingual) as well as a useful summary of curriculum projects.

Linking People summarises the priorities of existing South Australian Education Department policies, which shows both its continuing commitment to language

maintenance and its determination to extend language learning opportunities to all children:

- the opportunity for students to maintain and develop their mother tongue R-7;
- the opportunity for all students to learn at least one language other than English R-7;
- access for all students to the study of a language other than English at the secondary level;
- reasonable spread and balance across the State of the following eight identified languages of wider teaching: Chinese (Modern Standard), French, German, Greek (Modern), Indonesian, Italian, Japanese and Spanish (op. cit.: 13).

The implementation side of this policy is presented in the LOTE Development Plan, 1987-1995 which has implications for the level of Italian teaching in Government schools. At the time that the policy was produced, there were 18.3 additional salaries (out of 73.3) dedicated to the teaching of Italian in the primary school. Will this be affected by the following policies?

> The intent is that new programs set up in primary schools which are not community languages should be Chinese, Indonesian, Japanese and Spanish (op. cit.: 4).
>
> 90% of the dedicated new salaries will be allocated (to mother tongue development for R-7 children) in 1988, decreasing to 50% of the new salaries in 1991. Redistribution of salaries where clientele has declined/ grown/ dispersed (op. cit.: 9).

Through the allocation of resources (including 'take-off' salaries for the secondary school), the policy aims to change the profile of the range of languages offered in primary and secondary schools to include the above mentioned geopolitical languages (op. cit.: 3).

Unlike the Education Department policy, the Catholic Education policy does not nominate languages of wider teaching, sensibly leaving it up to schools to consider a range of factors (e.g. the language background of the school population or parental preferences) in planning LOTE programs.

6.2.4 Western Australia

Western Australia was another State which used the Commonwealth's Multicultural Education Program (from 1983) to introduce community languages into primary schools. But unlike NSW and Victoria, Western Australia did not continue where the Commonwealth left off and the program duly ceased, although some of the schools involved continue to teach a LOTE. Perhaps the level of support in the government was not high because some reluctance was expressed about language maintenance in the 1981 Policy Statement on Multicultural Education.

Since the NPL, Western Australia has grappled with a range of language issues and developed a comprehensive policy, *Languages for Western Australians* (Western Australia Ministry of Education 1988). Like the other State policies, it applies the ideas of the NPL to its own situation. While not mentioning any

specific dates, it recommends that: 'LOTE should be an integral component of the primary curriculum and the Ministry of Education should make a commitment to the expansion and continuity of such programs' (ibid.: Rec. 5:90).

Languages for Western Australians also recognises the needs of students from non-English speaking backgrounds to continue learning their language at school (ibid.: 21). It recommends that 'Bilingual programs and other appropriate language maintenance programs should be established in schools with significant numbers of speakers of a particular LOTE' (ibid.: Rec. 7:91). It also recommends that the role of ethnic schools in language maintenance be recognised and supported (ibid.: 18). It also recommends the establishment of a limited number of L2 immersion or part-immersion programs (ibid.: 20).

Whereas language maintenance in the primary school is supported by a specific recommendation in *Languages for Western Australians*, the same is not true of the secondary school. Certainly, it recommends that community language programs already offered by schools, often for students of that language background, should continue to receive support and that there should be an investigation into the demand for 'advanced language maintenance programs' and the possible roles of the Saturday School of Languages, TAFE and ethnic schools. Language programs in secondary schools should, in the view of the report, primarily cater for second language learners (ibid.: 95). This seems to be taking to an extreme the tendency in other States to satisfy a great many language demands at the secondary and even primary level through the Saturday Schools.

There is continuing strong growth in the teaching of Italian, but the increase has happened mainly in the primary school. As Moss (1991) points out, this is because 'there is a strong Italian ethnic base in the Western Australian community, and its members are very active in ensuring that the teaching of Italian in schools is given a prominent place'. There are [illegible] 25,000 children learning Italian across systems mostly on account of the [illegible] schools program, the main source of funding and staffing at primary level. Italian has had a firm place in Western Australia's primary and secondary schools which is reflected in its inclusion among the languages of wider teaching for second language learning at both primary and secondary level.

The implementation arm of this policy is the *Languages Other Than English: LOTE Strategic Plan* (Western Australia Ministry of Education 1991) which outlined the plan for the next three years. As with its predecessor, the 'languages for all' objective was not accompanied by any specifics, except that it applies to both the primary and secondary levels. Thus, the policy plans: 'The progressive introduction of LOTE into primary and secondary schools so that access to quality LOTE education will be available to all students' (ibid.: 4).

In the culling of languages that has been typical of 'languages of wider teaching' strategy, Italian does not suffer in this first phase. The policy plans to attain a system-wide balance of Asian and European languages and Italian is included as a European language (ibid.: 4).

One of the recommendations of *Languages for Western Australians* not taken up by the Ministry was the creation of a supernumerary primary specialist position (as exists in NSW, Victoria and SA). Instead they have retained the Contributory Primary Program whereby secondary language teachers run classes

in local primary schools. From the plan it would seem that the only provision for language maintenance in primary schools is through the Ethnic Schools Program (ibid.: 8), although at least one Partial Immersion (bilingual) Program in Italian is enriching the language of both Italian and non-Italian children (personal correspondence).

6.2.4.1 A Bird's Eye View of Italian Teaching in Western Australia in 1992[8]

Pre-school level

Emma Majoli Pre-school opened in 1970. In 1993 120 part-time or full-time children are enrolled, aged from two and a half to five years. The majority are from an Italian background. The centre is staffed by a director, two teachers, two teaching aides, two assistants and a cook. The Pre-school is open from 8.00 a.m. until 5.00 p.m. five days a week, and closes only for four weeks in summer. A bilingual program is followed, and the pre-school program for the five year olds is also bilingual.

Primary school level

a. Italo-Australian Welfare and Cultural Centre

The Centre manages courses in two hundred Government and Independent schools, both in insertion and after-hours modes, with eighty teachers. Lessons last between 30 and 60 minutes per week. A unified program is being planned for implementation in 1993.

b. Ministry of Education

There are 17 high school teachers conducting classes in Year 6 and 7 in thirty-eight primary feeder schools.

The Ministry of Education in co-operation with Catholic Education is running special teacher training courses for primary teachers of Italian origin to enable them to introduce Italian in their own classes. The language competence of these teachers has been tested by the University of Western Australia. At present 29 teachers are participating, 11 from Catholic schools and 18 from Government schools.

c. Bi-lingual courses

In 1991 a partial immersion program in Italian was introduced in two primary schools in Western Australia, East Wanneroo and Spearwood. Year 3 art, health, music and literature are taught through the medium of Italian for 3.5 hours per week. This will continue in Year 4 for four hours per week with literature, art, music and drama.

Secondary school level

Ninety-three Government schools offer Italian in Years 8 to 12. In some schools the subject is compulsory for the first year, and optional for the following years. In others it is only offered for a term a year during the first three years. Sixty Catholic schools offer Italian from Years 8 to 12.

8 by Alessandra Rafferty and Daniela De Santis, Teachers of Italian, Western Australia

University level

All three universities in Western Australia offer courses in Italian. The University of Western Australia offers courses in BA, BA Hons, MA, PhD, with postgraduate studies in literature, linguistics history and linguistics. In 1992 there were six teaching staff and 160 students, half of whom were of Italian background. Murdoch University offers courses for the first two undergraduate years. There is only one lecturer and 90 students. At Edith Cowen BA and BA Hons are offered with two teaching staff. The BA for interpreters and translators has been terminated, apparently because of limited demand.
All three universities offer continuing education courses for non-degree students.

Other courses

a. The Fifty Plus University, an innovative community initiative, begun in 1992, conducts two Italian courses, with two teachers.

b. The Dante Alighieri Society has four teachers and 80 students in eight classes of two hours per week. Dante Alighieri offers a competitive examination at three levels, held in August each year for students in the last three years of secondary school.

c. The Italian Language and Culture Centre runs two courses for children which are held on Saturday for three hours. It also runs two hour per week conversation and culture classes for adults at all levels.

d. St Joseph Pignatelli School offers courses at beginner, intermediate and advanced level. There is one teacher and about 50 students.

6.2.5 Queensland

In 1983 the Queensland Department of Education approved a policy of teaching LOTE in the primary school and some programs were started in schools with the assistance of the Commonwealth Multicultural Education Program. Until recently, however, progress in LOTE in Queensland (including at the primary level) has been slow. But the last couple of years have seen big changes. The Queensland Government has allocated a budget that, in these penny-pinching times, is quite remarkable at the State level. In 1991 they spent $5.5 million for language programs. This was part of the $65 million committed for the next ten years.

What has motivated this change of heart? Unlike the other States, Queensland has not developed a language policy report with broad input from professionals and the community (although work is proceeding on a language policy at the moment). It seems that the Queensland Government has opted for direct action on the language front, and in this respect it is quite unique. The direction of its policy, however, strongly reflects the policy of sections of the Federal Government. Trade is the unashamed motor driving this language policy. In Queensland, LOTE means business and they are taking their investment seriously.

The Queensland policy decisions and their rationale are presented in three documents (in pamphlet form) released by the Department of Education in 1991: a. *LOTE: A Statement from the Minister;* b. *Initiatives for the 90s -LOTE;* and c. *A Parent's Guide to Languages Other Than English.*

The *Statement from the Minister* (Queensland 1991a) portrays Queensland as the State 'at the forefront of the languages area'. This claim may now have an element of truth (particularly in terms of resources) but falls short in some significant ways (especially in terms of equity). He declares that: '... all young Queenslanders should have the opportunity to gain the intellectual, cultural and economic benefits of an education in a foreign language' (ibid.: 2).

The use of the term 'foreign language' is deliberate. This policy only grudgingly refers to the community languages spoken by Queenslanders.

Six principles are seen as essential to the long-term development of LOTE in Queensland:

1. Expansion of LOTE in the schools (including the employment of extra teachers and the future introduction of specialist language teachers at the primary level);
2. Continuity in learning languages (a survey of Italian teaching is being undertaken and this will investigate the desire for continuity in the secondary school for students studying Italian in primary insertion classes);
3. Quality in teaching and learning (comprehensive initiatives are being taken including in-country experience and an appreciation of the value of native speakers and the need for action to enable them to enter the education system);
4. Diversity in methods and materials (including the promotion of immersion programs);
5. Balance among languages (in which the five priority languages are announced - Chinese, French, German, Indonesian and Japanese. Mention is also made of the government's wish to develop 'equitable policies on community languages' through consultation);
6. Integration of languages teaching.

A comment needs to be made about interpretation of 'balance' in this statement. The intention, which is shared by other States, is to balance the traditional dominance of the two major European languages, French and German, with the newer Asian languages. What is more unusual, and one could say rather unbalanced, is that three Asian languages have been chosen but only two European. A lack of balance is also evident from the failure to include a community language which is also one of the languages of wider teaching. Italian would have been the best candidate.

In spite of the grand scale of Queensland's LOTE plan, no mention is made of widening the core curriculum to include LOTE. All the same, a time line has been drawn up to allow the orderly phasing in of LOTE availability for all:

1992: LOTE for all Year 8
1991-94: LOTE for all Years 6 and 7
2000: LOTE for all Years 1-8
2000: LOTE for all Years 9-12
2000: 20% of Year 12 to have studied a LOTE to the final year (Queensland 1991b).

The future for Italian in Queensland does not look particularly bright. It has not been included in the five priority languages even though it is strongly represented in the schools and is the language of a sizeable and well-established

community. Italian will receive some resources 'on the basis of demand to ensure continuity of learning' as one of the languages presently taught in Queensland schools. It is also a community language and, as such, 'will be maintained and developed'.

There is a category of 'supported' languages which are Italian, Spanish and Vietnamese. These and the five 'priorities' are the eight languages nominated for the Commonwealth program of grants of $300 per Year 12 student studying a LOTE.

6.2.6 Tasmania

Tasmania's LOTE policy is still in draft form, reflecting this State's comparative lack of experience in the development of LOTE policy. At this stage the priority languages selected are French, German, Japanese and Indonesian. Italian may be taught if the school wishes but in this case the school is responsible for the resourcing of the programs and continuity is not guaranteed by the Department of Education.

The upper primary and lower secondary (Years 5 to 8) are favoured for the core study of a LOTE. But as yet LOTE has no place in the primary curriculum, although there has been some experimentation by schools, including in the teaching of Italian (Muir in press).

6.2.6.1 Italian in Tasmania - Policy[9]

The Department of Education and the Arts is currently awaiting the outcomes of a broad based consultation process concerning the future direction of LOTE teaching in Tasmania. Submissions have been sought from all sections of the Tasmanian community so that the Department in collaboration with the Minister can use the recommendations to form the basis of the Tasmanian policy on LOTE.

The recent launch of the K-12 framework document in Tasmania has given LOTE a potentially enormous boost in the State. The document follows closely the national agenda and includes LOTE as one of the eight major learning areas. Further to this, the State has nominated six priority languages which are French, German, Japanese, Indonesian, Chinese and Italian. The State is targeting an initial policy for a LOTE to be studied in Years 5-8, which it hopes to develop into a full K-12 program in the future.

The argument has been put forward that we should only concentrate on teaching four languages in our schools (French, German, Indonesian and Japanese) while Italian, Chinese and other languages are relegated to optional courses for Years

[9] by Shane Parker, Secondary School Teacher of Italian, Tasmania

11-12 or taught at the discretion of the school. The implication of this is that the school must find its own resources to teach non-priority languages.

The future of both Italian and Chinese lies therefore in the Department's commitment to a policy of six priority languages. If in 1995, which is the date given for delivering the LOTE policy statement, Italian is still on the list, the argument of resourcing will become a non-issue for Italian, and school planners can legitimately support its inclusion in their programs. Non-priority languages will certainly not be considered by most schools after 1995.

Our problem in Tasmania is that in politics, as the saying goes, a lot can happen in a day, and whilst we currently have Italian included in the six priority languages listing, Italian teachers feel they cannot let their guard down for a single moment ... and may I add, this merry band of devotees certainly does not intend to!

6.2.7 Northern Territory

The Northern Territory was an early starter in the Australian language teaching stakes, an advantage given them by the Commonwealth Government which was until recently responsible for education in the Territory. Bilingual education programs in a number of Aboriginal languages were introduced from 1973 onwards. These programs targeted Aboriginal students and aimed to assist their educational development.

The Territory's long and unique experience with bilingual programs in Aboriginal languages has had a strong influence on Northern Territory language policy making. It has resulted in a policy which balances very well the equity issues concerning language maintenance for Aboriginal children and those from other community language backgrounds with the broader issue of second language learning. It also meant that the Northern Territory was one of the States which published its language policy in 1988.

Experience in teaching languages in the primary school was quick off the mark, with the appointment of an Educational Adviser in Modern Languages in 1977. This adviser was successful in stimulating primary programs. Staff are part-time instructors who are available to any school wishing to start a language program and who are additional to normal staffing. The policy recognises the disadvantages of this scheme: i.e. that the instructors are not trained teachers and the programs are not guaranteed. It points to the need to establish a pool of primary school language teachers.

The two key policy principles are:

- Aboriginal and ethnic groups should have the opportunity to maintain and develop their languages and cultures.
- All students should develop practical skills in at least one language other than English (Northern Territory 1988:5).

To implement these principles, the policy recommends that every primary and secondary school child study at least one LOTE for two years This means at least 160 hours for primary (two hours per week) and 200 hours for secondary (2.5 hours

per week). Continuity and quality are emphasised. So too are 'special needs': 'wherever possible all non-English speaking students should have the opportunity to develop initial literacy and continuing support in their mother tongue' (ibid.: 6).

The policy endorses the six priority languages chosen by the Northern Territory Government: Indonesian, Malay, Japanese, Mandarin, Italian, Greek, plus traditional Aboriginal languages. The choice of these languages reflects both international and community considerations, with a significant leaning towards the latter. The Italian community in the Northern Territory is relatively small but significant, and this may account for the inclusion of Italian.

In 1991 the Northern Territory Department of Education launched its Ten Year LOTE Implementation Strategy which is less specific than the policy on the question of students' exposure to language study:

> All students in primary schools will have access to LOTE instruction through at least one of a range of models e.g. discrete LOTE programs, formal bilingual programs, immersion programs ... All secondary students will have access to LOTE programs (Northern Territory 1991a:5).

In *Time Allocations*, however, a policy pamphlet published by the Northern Territory Board of Studies (Northern Territory 1991b), it is clear that the earlier policies on time have been retained or improved: two hours per week in the primary school and 280 hours or seven units in Years 8 and 9.

Priority at the primary level is given to programs in Years 6 and 7, the staffing of which will be within normal establishment. To ensure continuity, each primary school will offer at least one (but no more than two) of the languages offered at their feeder high schools. No particular grades are specified as having priority in the secondary. Guarantees are made regarding the availability of teaching materials for both primary and secondary in the priority languages (which are the same as in the policy). A range of services is also to be made available to LOTE teachers for their professional development.

6.2.8 Australian Capital Territory

Learning a LOTE has been seen as a valuable part of an ACT child's education since the late 1970s. Responding to the interest from schools, a small scheme of five supernumerary teachers was created whose role it was to establish new programs. After two to three years the schools were expected to staff the program themselves (ACT 1990:3). Bilingual programs have been another part of the LOTE landscape in the ACT. The Telopea Park program in French and English, which is still continuing, receives financial support from the French and Australian governments.

In 1990 the ACT Department of Education published a policy document (*Languages other than English in ACT Government Schools 1990-2000*). The policy declares that 'Every student should have the opportunity to learn at least one language other than English for as many years as possible' (ibid.: 1). A great deal of reference is made to the NPL, for example in program models, priority

languages (which are the same as the NPL) and other initiatives. One exception to this tendency is the total absence of any reference to language maintenance needs in ACT schools. Perhaps there is some sensitivity on this issue because, in referring to bilingual programs, the policy makes the following statement: 'If the language other than English is seen to be inferior in some way by the students, then the motivation to remain with that language lessens' (ibid.: 5). Finally, the policy recommends that secondary students should have a choice of an Asian and a European language, preferably in their own school (ibid.: 6).

A draft action plan 1987-95 has been developed but as yet such a document has not been released (ACT n.d.). The draft plan targets the secondary school, recommending the following:

> Every (secondary) student should have the opportunity to learn at least one language other than English for as many years as possible.
> 1993: all Year 7 students studying a LOTE for a year
> 1996: all Year 7-8 students studying a LOTE for a year
> 2000: all Year 7-10 studying a LOTE for a year (ibid.: 2).

The goal proposed for colleges is

> To increase the number of students studying LOTE at the senior secondary level...
> 1993: 15% continue to Year 12
> 1996: 20% continue to Year 12
> 2000: at least 25% continue to Year 12 (ibid.: 5).

For primary schools, the draft plan recommends:

> (Primary) students should have access to language programs from the early primary years...
> 1993: Model pathways K-12 in each major language.
> 1996: all students to be introduced to a LOTE at some stage in primary school.
> 2000: LOTE programs to exist in at least upper levels of all primary schools (ibid.: 3).

The scheme mentioned earlier for initiating programs is to continue with these specialist teachers being supported by generalist teachers on the staff. Detailed consideration is given to staffing in the draft plan.

6.3 Italian Government Policies and Initiatives

The interest of the Italian Government in the promotion of the Italian language and culture abroad has been growing in the wake of the Italian 'economic miracle' of the 1960s. Before this period there were specific provisions for the Italian Institute of Culture and for Italian schools abroad, (e.g. Decree *(regio decreto)* no. 740 of 19 February 1940), and some support for the Dante Alighieri Societies.

The new Act concerning the Italian Institutes of Culture abroad and 'initiatives for the promotion of Italian culture and language abroad' (Italian Parliament Act no. 401, Dec. 1990) with its comparatively greater emphasis in language learning and teaching reflects the developments of the last three decades or so.

The resurgence of interest in the destiny of the Italian culture and language abroad, once the country was able to afford it, was driven by the demand of post-World War II migrants, particularly those in European countries, who were also likely to return to Italy. This led to the approval in 1971 of the Act of the Italian Parliament no. 153, concerning educational and professional development initiatives for Italian workers and their families abroad. (See also Chapter 2.) Most of the educational activities of Italian-speaking communities abroad have been funded since then within this legal instrument.

Specifically concerning Australian-Italian cultural co-operation, the main instrument is the bilateral cultural agreement signed in Rome on 8 January 1975 (Moreno and Nardi-Ford 1992:24). This agreement generates triennial programs, agreed upon by both Governments, which review implementation of the agreement, and promote new initiatives in both countries.

At the end of the 1970s and in parallel with the increasing economic and commercial importance of Italy, the renewed interest of the Italian Government began to focus beyond the phenomenon of migration and beyond Europe. A world-wide survey sponsored by the Italian Government was carried out to ascertain what reasons people might have for studying Italian outside Italy (Baldelli et al. 1981, and Chapter 5.1).

A commission was created jointly by the Italian Ministries of External Affairs and Education whose objective was to report on the status of the teaching of Italian as a second language in the world and generate policy guidelines for the teaching of Italian as a foreign language. From 1982 to 1990 the Commission organised conferences and publications of papers on the topic both in Italy and in the major areas of Italian presence in the world. Its final Report (Lo Cascio et al. 1991) concluded that there was, indeed, an urgent need for a language policy and, interestingly, devoted much attention to the issues pertaining to the teaching of the language. It focuses on two reasons:

- a serious and long term commitment to studying the culture of a country requires knowledge of the language and, in turn;
- language teaching requires a systematic program of training and in-servicing of teachers (op. cit.: 5-6).

Such a framework explains the increasing expenditure in language-oriented initiatives particularly where there was a response by the local school structures, as happened in Australia under the impulse of its multicultural policies. Thus Italian Government expenditure on language teaching and cultural activities in Australia increased by 64% between 1987 and 1991 as estimated in Table 2.5. That table also summarises the items on which the over $6 million Italian expenditure are distributed and shows that language teaching and learning activities are clearly the most supported.

The most important innovation through the 1980s was the consent and support given for the introduction of Italian into the mainstream schools as against relegating it to Saturday or after-hours classes. This support kept growing, financially, even after the Commonwealth Government share, i.e. the ESP program, was frozen to 1986 levels.

The direct financial support of community based committees was enriched by increased provision of teaching materials and growing in-service initiatives for teachers organised for them both in Italy and in Australia. The new didactic directors attached to consulates came with higher qualifications and skills. But in terms of human resources an important innovation came in 1991 with the first contingent of Italian language advisers who were to work within the respective Department of School Education in each of the mainland States. This placement within mainstream education structures made such innovation qualitatively different and reflects the character of the Italian Government contribution which would like to see the language taught within mainstream structures, with dignity equal to other subjects (Moreno and Nardi-Ford 1992:71). The help afforded should be regarded nevertheless as temporary and not taken for granted since the responsibility for mainstream education is and will remain Australian. In any case the increased assistance outlined above would have been less likely without the interest and work of a tireless Education Attaché and other Embassy officials.

These funds and commitments should be more widely appreciated than they are. Greater co-operation between governments, and jointly funded ventures (e.g. in-servicing, exchange of teachers, joint publication of teaching material) should characterise future government to government relations.

6.3.1 The Critical Role of the Italian Consul, Vice Consul and Education Advisers

The role of Italian Consul, Vice-Consul, and Education and Language Advisers was mentioned as critical by people interviewed in Perth, Darwin and Hobart and Adelaide, either for their role in the establishment of classes or in rescuing them when they were under threat because of lack of funds, e.g. *Se non ci fosse stato il governo Italiano, avremo chiuso l'anno scorso* Translation: But for the Italian Government, we would have had to close down last year (ICWA, Hobart. Personal communication).

A visit by the Italian Consul or Direttore Didattico was referred to as the starting point for Italian classes in Port Pirie. Albany, Kalgoorlie and Bunbury.

Some interviewees expressed their belief that funds from the Italian Government for the teaching of Italian had come too late:

Qui siamo emigrati di prima del 50... La maggioranza dell'emigrazione del Nord Queensland è contadina, quindi il 99% sono contadini e sono stati trascurati negli anni passati ... dal Governo Italiano. ... Adesso quando hanno cominciato a dargli dei soldi, quelli se ne fregano, non capivano più l'italiano, non sapevano parlare (Transcript 29:1).
Translation: We migrated before the 50s ... the majority of North Queensland migration is of peasant stock, 99% are peasants and they have been ignored in the past by the Italian Government ... Now money is beginning to come but it is too late, they can't speak Italian any longer.

Others spoke of the serious consequences of delays in the Italian government funds arriving. For example teachers had to work without being paid, and paying for their own travelling expenses. This was mentioned both in the ACT and Mt Gambier.

Teachers were lost to the community-based classroom in Darwin because of delays in the arrival of funds, according to interviewees. This loss was a significant factor in the collapse of the Italian government funded programs from 1800 to 200 students. Teachers have now transferred to the Department of Education and are no longer available for Italian Government funded classes.

6.3.2 The Italian Institute for Culture

The supporting role of the Italian Government goes well beyond language teaching activities. Many of the initiatives are undertaken within the framework of the 1975 bilateral cultural agreement between Australia and Italy under which a program is stipulated every three years. Among the most important ongoing activities supported by the program are the two Italian cultural institutes, one in Melbourne (the older and larger one) and one in Sydney. The staff comprises a director and other specialist personnel as well as support staff. The institutes promote and conduct Italian cultural activities in collaboration with Australian institutions ranging from film to their own teaching, mainly of adult students. The institutes have a library which includes films, video tapes and other audiovisual materials, lent to universities and schools on request. Their support role in education has been further strengthened by a recent reform of the Act which regulates their operations. (There seems to be no parallel Australian cultural institute in Italy, which is a pity since there is considerable Italian interest in Australia, as much for its Aboriginal culture and its environment as, for example, its film making.)

6.3.3 Assistance to the Italian Language Media in Australia

The Italian Government, as reported in Table 2.5, subsidises the Italian language print media in Australia by a number of issues and print run. Assistance includes news services through the Italian national news service (ANSA) and recently some in-servicing for Italo-Australian print and radio journalists who write or broadcast in Italian. These courses take place in Italy and their cost, including the air fare, is covered by the relevant Italian Government instrumentality.

Other forms of support for the use of the Italian language in the media include the weekly current affairs program *Italia news*, produced by Italian state radio and television (RAI), and broadcast on Sundays in Australia by Special Broadcasting Service (SBS). It is fast becoming an important language resource for the community and also for teaching Italian especially at tertiary level. SBS broadcasts the program free of charge and copyright is waived when it is used for educational purposes.

6.3.4 Other Educational-cultural Contributions

Up to six *lettori* (Italian language tutors or lecturers allocated to tertiary institutions) may be placed in Australian universities, although only two were operational in 1992.

For university students there are scholarships totalling about one hundred months, and covering expenses relating to courses and some air fares. Among the more specifically educational contributions are courses for the professional development of teachers of Italian from primary to tertiary level. These courses are usually conducted at the two designated Italian universities for foreigners at Perugia and Siena.

Textbooks and other teaching materials are also supplied on request to the community-based committees, who ask mostly for materials relevant for the primary school level. The number of requests for these books has increased considerably in the last few years. Universities have requested and obtained, on an *ad hoc* basis, books and other educational material.

Contributions are made to special projects such as academic conferences, the biennial Frederick May Foundation for Italian Studies (University of Sydney), or art exhibitions such as *Rubens and the Renaissance* held at the Australian National Gallery, and special film seasons such as one dedicated to Visconti or Pasolini. Table 2.5 does not include these, nor the contribution of Italian regional institutions to the cultural and social activities of regional associations in Australia.

6.4 Community Initiatives

6.4.1 Language Maintenance as Welfare

The teaching of Italian was started by and within the Italian community for the well-being of the community itself. The Italian Government was involved early on in language maintenance programs, initially in a very minor way. Language maintenance programs gained support from the Australian Government largely through the Federal Ethnic Schools Program, because they were seen as important for the nation's social and political well-being. They also gained support at a State level for similar reasons but also on account of their educational equity value and in some cases because of parental interest.

6.4.2 The Community and the Mainstream

The desire to see Italian as a legitimate area of study in school and the demand from parents and schools themselves encouraged community based committees to 'insert' teaching programs into the mainstream. However, the time spent by school children in the Italian language classroom at primary level (rarely more

than one hour a week) in an English speaking environment is insufficient for language maintenance and development purposes or for acquiring Italian as a second language. What can be achieved in one hour of the school week has to be realistically assessed not only against the time allocation but also in terms of the settings and the functions in which the language is being used or learnt. That is a question that any teaching institution must face up to: how far can the institution take the process of acquisition and ultimate attainment? In answer to this question many universities in Europe and the USA prescribe an in-country experience especially for those students who intend to use the language as a professional instrument. The European Community has also activated a number of schemes to facilitate and promote in-country experiences including university studies (appropriately recognised by the home country of the student). Australia could also devote some resources to fostering such experiences for young people in order to produce the necessary degree of language expertise, competencies and skills in present and future teachers and other language professionals.

In any case this is where the community, rather than substituting for the school in its function of imparting formal reading and writing skills in more than one language, acts as a language-specific environment with a whole range of facilities and activities, collateral to the school, that encourage language acquisition and maintenance. Some community associations and teachers at various levels are attempting to provide an answer, however partial it may be given the constraints of time and resources available. The Italian human, social and cultural resources already existing in Australia can and should be mobilised to support the teaching that goes on in the institutions, for instance with artistic enterprises such as 'Broccoli Education' who bring both entertainment and language into schools. There are also some long-running bilingual pre-schools in Perth and in Adelaide. There was a proposal, supported by the Italian Consul of Sydney, to begin a bilingual Italian school (Dussoni, letter 1992). In a bilingual school, the problem of insufficient time to learn and be exposed to the Italian language should not occur. There are instances of other kinds of language immersion classes, e.g. *la piazza* week-ends at Griffith University (Carsaniga 1991:172) and the *vacanzascuola*, intensive language immersion holiday camps, (held in Sydney and Canberra) designed to fill the language and cultural gap left by minimum exposure to Italian during the school week (Di Biase Settembre 91 - Gennaio 92).

The classroom and school environment are steeped in English. It is extremely difficult in the short time available to introduce and sustain the use of Italian from week to week. Many language teachers seek to make contact with the Italian community in Australia and to connect with modern day Italy. They are successful to varying degrees using devices such as school excursions, language immersion days, teacher exchange and student exchange.

One of the most ambitious student exchange programs encountered is that running in Albany, WA since 1984. It was proposed by Paolo Lionetti of the Albany Italian club and organised by the Western Australian Association of Teachers of Italian (WAATI) (Smargiassi 1987). WAATI has been organising these student exchanges since 1979.

There are many language policy documents around in which the right of every Australian to a second language is declared. If done properly, this becomes a vast and expensive operation. No government has yet been prepared to commit the

funds and create the infrastructure required to ensure success. The alternative might be to espouse the notion of language exposure so that every Australian school child has a right to be exposed to elements of a language other than English for approximately one hour of the school week.

Increasingly, a voluntary levy is being requested from schools and parents to ensure continuation of Italian programs run by community groups because of the cost involved and partly because of changes in administrative arrangements for Commonwealth funding of insertion classes and ethnic schools in general introduced by the White Paper (DEET 1991).

The problems remain of the unclear nature of insertion classes and the proposed changes. Language classes remain vulnerable to forces outside the classroom, e.g. changes in priority languages, continuity between sectors, need for a minimum number of hours to ensure some degree of language learning that reaches beyond language learning experience.

It is likely that this may result in a revival of interest in non-insertion courses predicated, however, on the quality of the offering rather than on student numbers.

6.4.3 Maintenance as a National Resource

The focus of a language policy should be on language maintenance as a national resource. If it is, then a great deal of long term planning and the commitment of considerable resources would be evident. This would be necessary to ensure that native speakers of Italian or dialect become highly trained professionals, able to pass on these linguistic skills to the next generation of Italian speaking background and to other Australians.

This linguistic resource of native speakers, once sustained and extended, would ensure that the nation has access to the kind of skilled, bilingual speakers needed for high level translation and interpreting and for other professions, at a national and international level. It would also ensure that there is a volume of competent bilingual speakers at all levels of society. There is little evidence that this has been the approach of Australian governments towards Italian currently or in the past, except at the level of policy rhetoric.

7 THE ITALIAN LANGUAGE IN AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY

The aim of this chapter is to describe the extent, variety and language resources of the Italian-background communities in Australia. This shows how Italian is the most used and the most available LOTE in Australia and the one with the highest 'natural demand'.

The descriptive task is complex and the gaps in our knowledge are still many from a historical point of view. Cresciani (1992:130) talks of 'historiographic amnesia' on the part of mainstream Australian history towards the historical presence of cultural minorities, including the Italian, in spite of their number and their presence over the last two hundred years. There are also gaps in synchronic knowledge which this chapter, along with recent publications on the subject, attempts to fill in. The task has been tackled by using a mix of objective and evaluative elements. Thus statistical, demographic and other data derived from bibliographical research as well as a six week survey of major Italian language newspapers are used alongside evaluative statements based on interviews conducted with a range of members of Italian communities by G. and H. Andreoni. Quotes from interviews unless otherwise stated are from interviews conducted and transcribed as part of this project. For reasons of confidentiality interviewees are not identified as sources of specific comments. Transcripts remain with G. and H. Andreoni.

7.1 The Impact of Migration

Language does not develop in a vacuum. The main objective reason for the strong presence of Italian in educational institutions in Australia is the social context and 'natural' demand provided in the first instance by the Italian first generation, but increasingly by the second and third generation. The Italian-speaking community in Australia extends well beyond the narrow boundaries of what the Census counts as 'Italian-born' and their children. It includes, in fact, Australian residents who were born in countries which had a close historical interaction with or earlier migrations from Italy. Most of these speakers of Italian, in turn, are in some kind of network with other Australians of various backgrounds, because of socio-cultural association including descent, marriage, neighbourhood, work and business, established over several decades.

An interesting pointer to these inter ethnic networks is the fact that Italian is spoken well beyond its own ethnic boundaries: 10,400 among the (Australian-born) respondents to the 1986 census who declared their ancestry as 'Australian, British or Irish' also reported speaking Italian at home and demonstrates the 'natural demand' for formal study of the language arising from such networks. The figure would have been much higher if social or professional speakers of Italian had been included. In any case the above figure, as can be appreciated from Table 7.1, makes Italian the most common language other than English in those ancestry groups (Castles, 1991 Table 4.3). The diversity of the Italian speech community thus well reflects the diversity of the Australian society itself.

	Australian	British or Irish	Total[2]	As a % of Australian-born speakers[3]
Arabic	2,200	500	2,700	7.5
Chinese	300	400	700	5.2
Dutch	600	300	900	10.8
French	2,500	4,900	7,400	46.2
German	2,300	2,700	5,000	22.5
Greek	2,400	900	3,300	2.9
Italian	7,300	3,100	10,400	6,4
Maltese	1,400	100	1,500	10.7
Polish	400	100	500	4.5
Spanish	900	600	1,500	13.6
Vietnamese	100	100	200	6.1

Table 7.1
Selected LOTEs spoken at home by Australian-born of Australian and British or Irish ancestries[1] 1986
1. Comprises single ancestry responses only
2. Figures (rounded) are likely much lower than they should be because they exclude speakers who did not state their ancestry as well as those who stated multiple ancestry.
3. Comprises only those who speak the language at home
Source: Castles, 1991:29

The history of the Italian-speaking community in Australia, apart from a handful of First Fleeters and individual artists, adventurers, travellers and political refugees (with Raffaello Carboni the Eureka stockade raconteur as their most famous representative) can be said to begin with the New Italy settlement near Lismore in the 1880s. Fewer than 6,000 Italians were located by the time of Federation (1901 census), a figure that slowly increased to about 35,000 by the eve of World War II. They were hardly mentioned by mainstream historians, as happened with other minorities.

The post-World War II migration phenomenon, of which Italians made up an important component, attracted first of all the attention of demographers such as W. D. Borrie and C. A. Price in the fifties and sixties. The sheer numerical strength and economic role of Italian migration demanded attention. Sociologists, linguists and historians followed the demographers and continued to fill the glaring gap in the Australian canvas, with contributions from the vantage point offered by their respective fields. J. Martin, G. Andreoni, G. Rando, M. de Lepervanche, M. Loh, C. Bettoni, G. Cresciani, J. Wilton and R. Bosworth, H. Ware, L. Bertelli, A. Pittarello, R. Pascoe, J. Collins, to name just a few, helped, with their studies, shape understanding of contemporary Australia. The reader is referred to the bibliography for pertinent references.

Indeed, among studies that specifically involve 'migrant languages' in Australia, Italian seems to have attracted (numerically speaking) the most attention with 68 studies, closely followed by German (58) and Dutch (17), Polish (13), Russian (10), Japanese (6) and so on (Bettoni 1991 Table 1 based on a 1988 survey by B. Taylor).

This characteristic interest of the last three decades or so stands in welcome contrast to the historians' neglect and, still worse, racism and persecution experienced by Italian settlers particularly between the wars when they had to endure, for instance, racist campaigns such as those led by *Smith's Weekly*, Commissions set up to investigate foreign settlers, and anti-Italian riots in Kalgoorlie and Innisfail. The participation of Italy in World War II did not

help to rectify the negative views Australians had of Italians. The 4,727 Italian-background Australian residents interned in concentration camps during World War II regardless of their 'enemy alien' or 'naturalised British subject' status represented more than 10% of all Italian-background Australian residents at the time. Add to this the 18,432 Italian POW transported to Australia from British prison camps in Egypt and India (Cresciani, 1992:132) and the conclusion must be reached that about one third of the Italian-background people found in Australia between 1941 and 1944 must have experienced some form of detention!

Of course this was hardly the best set of conditions for the unprecedented thousands of Italian immigrants arriving during the fifties, while the local Italians were still nursing the suffering inflicted by the recent conflict and were still considered as 'enemy' by many Australians. Nevertheless they were, with other immigrants of the time, the human muscle that made massive public works schemes and private enterprise industry possible and turned Australia into a modern, cosmopolitan and advanced manufacturing country. The generous contribution of these immigrants (from Italy as well as from Central Europe, Germany, Greece, Yugoslavia) in time gave them the necessary economic stability and self-confidence to speak out and reject assimilationist policies of the fifties and sixties.

The contribution of Italians to the social, cultural and economic make-up of Australia occurs, beyond the Italian speaking community, in the many areas of the sciences and the humanities, as well as technology. The many valuable articles that make up the volume *Understanding Italy* (Bettoni and Lo Bianco (eds) 1989) testify to the range of Italian contribution to physical and mathematical sciences, engineering, biology and biomedical engineering, architecture, figurative arts, politics, music and performing arts in the Australian context.

Among recent works testifying to the current interest (in Italy and Australia) in the presence of Italians in Australia is the overview commissioned by Fondazione Agnelli and edited (1992) by Stephen Castles *et al.*, *Australia's Italians: culture and community in a changing society*. It is significant that this study is published in both English and Italian versions (*La popolazione di origine italiana in Australia*). In Sydney it was launched by early Italian language radio personality Mamma Lena at the Marconi Club and in Wollongong by Italo-Australian unionist Nando Lelli at the Fraternity Club (*La Fiamma* 18 6 92:34). Such works are of particular importance to second and third generations who need to reclaim their historical and cultural roots.

7.2 Size and Distribution of the Italian-speaking Community in Australia

Notions of 'community', 'descent' or 'ethnic origin' of a group within a nation are at best problematic and demographically imprecise, whether referring to the Italian or any other. Indeed it would be as justifiable to speak, for instance, of 'Italian communities' in Australia in the sense of generational and/or historical stratifications. Thus the pre-World War II wave of Italian immigrants was followed by a much larger and varied wave in the fifties and sixties, which was

followed in turn by a much smaller and again different influx of the last two decades, which includes shorter term technical and business people following Italian-based enterprises. What can also be noticed is an increasing presence of Italian speaking tourists.

The 415,000 strong Italian speech community in Australia is not made up only of the Italian-born. It also includes ethnic Italians who were born in Malta, Egypt, Ethiopia, Switzerland, the Adriatic seaboard states of Yugoslavia, as well as Argentina, Uruguay and other American or European countries which received migrants from the Italian peninsula before and, especially, after completion of the process of Italian unification last century up to World War I and then after World War II.

To speak of 'Italian communities' in the plural would also be justifiable in terms of the various generations of children born in Australia within the above groups but also from intermarriages with other ethnic groups, including of course Anglo-Celtic ancestries (cf Table 7.1).

Other factors of differentiation are of a cultural, regional and socio-economic nature. Clearly then we are talking of a complex (not uniform) social aggregate. It is important, however, to identify the significance of the term 'ethnic community' and in our case 'Italian community' without separating it from the rest of the Australian population - which would be extremely difficult to do in any case - but simply as a national fact, as an integral part of the definition of what the Australian nation is today, and of what its international connections are. What then in particular characterises the community is the persistence of a bundle of cultural and affective values, such as shared languages, moral code of behaviour, common beliefs and traditions (cf Rosoli 1989:8). These are sometimes better preserved in Australia than in Italy. For instance, many first generation immigrants returning to Italy for a holiday after many years in Australia report comments on their language variety as having preserved the 'old' or 'true' forms compared with the contemporary Italian of relatives and friends of the same locality.

7.2.1 Italian Speakers' Migration and Settlement Patterns

Claims are often made that the Italian community in Australia numbers almost one million (e.g. Bettoni 1989:48). This may not be far from the truth provided we take the term in the broad sense previously outlined. Some of the discussion in this section, however, is limited by the fact that official immigration and demographic statistics are often organised by reference to birthplace. Whenever this is the case there occurs a failure to account for the wider Italian speaking community which includes ethnic Italian from different countries or nationalities and their descendants.

The main source of data for this section of the profile is the Australian Bureau of Statistics 1986 census data and other publications based on these data such as those by the Bureau of Immigration Research (e.g. BIR: 1990). These mostly reflect a narrow (Italian-born and their descendants) definition of the Italian speech community. Figures need, therefore, to be read with this important proviso in mind.

The small influx of permanent residents from Italy in the last decade would indicate that figures from the most recent (1991) census, not fully available at the time of writing, are not likely to produce a strikingly different picture. Furthermore, the ancestry question asked by the 1986 census was not, regrettably, asked by the 1991 census, thus making the 1986 figures perhaps more significant for our purposes.

The Italian born population of Australia peaked in 1971 with 289,476 people and has been slowly decreasing since. Table 7.2 shows that in the decade 1975-1985 arrivals dropped to 1,000 per year, and subsequently to only a few hundreds.

	1959-65	1965-75	1975-80	1980-85	1985-86	1986-87	1987-88	1989-90	1959-90
Settler arrivals (Italy-born)	92,740	84,940	6,610	4,700	680	590	420	310	191,520
Settler departures (Italy-born)	1,330	6,750	1,840	1,700	250	230	210	190	12,730

Table 7.2
Arrivals and departures 1959-90
Total departures as % of arrivals between 1959 and 1990 was 6.5%
Source: BIR (1991a)

Unlike the early Italian immigrants who established themselves in rural areas, the post Second World War migrants overwhelmingly settled in urban centres where manufacturing or construction jobs were available. This pattern has been stable for the last three decades and only about 15% of the Italian-born lived, at the 1986 census, outside the eight capital cities. Melbourne, the largest Italian city in Australia, recorded nearly 100,000 Italian-born which was also the highest concentration of any major urban centre in Australia (3.4% of the population). Sydney had the next largest numbers of Italian-born, almost 60,000, (1.8% of the population). In three other urban centres the concentration of Italian-born was higher than in Sydney: Adelaide (2.8%); Perth (2.4%); and Wollongong (2.2%).

The 1986 census reported that well over 90% of the Italian migrants to Australia lived in Australia for 10 years or more, and the median period of residence was 28.3 years. This remarkable degree of stability is confirmed by the low rate of return migration: a mere 6.5% over the last three decades. The Italian-born population is ageing. The median age in 1986 was just over 50 years; 22.5% were in the 55-64 age ground, and 14.2% were aged 65 or more. Only 0.8% were aged under 15. There are about 8% more men than women in all adult age groups, with the highest proportion of men to women in the age group over 55. The great majority of Italian-born, 75%, acquired Australian citizenship.

7.2.2 Schooling, Qualifications, Employment

Over 33% of the Italian-born had left school before they were thirteen. Compared with the total population, Italian-born possessed above average levels of qualification in the skilled trades, and a lower level of tertiary qualifications. The level of qualifications of those who came from Italy during the 1980s was much higher than those who arrived earlier. For example, degrees or higher qualifications increased by over 25%. The Italian-born were over-represented in the manufacturing and construction industries and in agriculture.

They tend to be under-represented in professional and para-professional occupations, and over-represented among tradespersons and labourers. Among the Italian-born there is a slightly lower participation rate in the labour force than the general population. This can be attributed partly to the relatively high proportion of aged people in the group and to the lower than average proportion of Italian-born women in the labour force.

A higher than average percentage of Italian-born are home owners, and had, as a group, among the lowest rates of unemployment (5.5%). Low rates of unemployment were also recorded with second generation Italians, a fact that may be explained by the higher than average rates (25%) of Italian-born who were self-employed or employed others, a feature shared with the Greek-born. Reflecting the negligible immigration from Italy in the last decade there were only about 2,600 Italian born children still at school in 1986. A majority of these (54%) were in Government schools. Apparently there are no publications cross-tabulating Italian background children still at school. This issue is taken up further below.

7.2.3 Italian Ancestry

The precise number of people of Italian ancestry is difficult to determine. Castles (1991:11) sets the number at 507,200. On the other hand the addition of 'Italian' and 'Italian Mix' in the table presented by the demographer Price (1990:62) yields 557,110 people but only persons aged five and over are counted. According to the Bureau of Immigration Research (1990a:37), which accounts also for persons under five years of age, the total figure reaches 620,227 (the primary source cited is the 1986 census: Matrix tape XC0001). Under-reporting on census data forms is a likely occurrence. Price (op. cit.: 64) reports that over one million people did not answer the 1986 ancestry question at all. The last figure, then, could easily be higher.

Over half a million Australian residents declared their ancestry as 'Italian' at the 1986 census. This was, as Castles reports (op. cit.: 13) the third most frequent response after 'English' and 'Australian' and, curiously, ahead of 'Irish' and 'Scottish'. People reporting Italian ancestry accounted for 3.3% of all responses. About one half of these people, exactly 250,500, were born in Italy, 158,700 born in Australia and 2,500 born in Egypt. The last figure is most probably much lower than it should be. In fact the number of Egypt-born who report speaking Italian at home is much higher (3,900) (op. cit.: Table 4.2). No figures are given for Italian speakers from other birth-places, such as Malta, Switzerland, etc., as most of the pertinent tables in the publication only show the first three ranking groups.

Among people of non-Anglo-Celtic ancestry, Italians ranked first in Victoria, NSW, Western Australia and the ACT; the second group, after Germans, both in Queensland and in South Australia. Only in the Northern Territory they did not figure amongst the most numerous groups.

Focusing on specific localities, the highest concentrations of people reporting Italian ancestry are Hinchinbrook in Queensland with 24.8% of the population, closely followed by Griffith in NSW (24.6%), Campbelltown and Payneham in

South Australia with 23% and 22% respectively and Coburg in Victoria with 20.7%. The only reported exceptions are German ancestry settlements in South Australia such as Tanunda and Eudunda with 33% and 28% respectively.

7.3 Italian Language Resources: Ethnolinguistic Vitality

Various frameworks, functional explanations and influencing factors have been postulated for the persistent use of community languages (and Italian among them). For the Australian situation the principal point of reference is today, as has been for over two decades, the indefatigable Michael Clyne. His recent work *Community Languages: the Australian Experience* (1991) constitutes both a review of the field and a further contribution to understanding the intricate interconnection between language and society. Clyne develops the concept of 'ethnolinguistic vitality' used first by Howard Giles in 1977 by bringing into the discussion other frames of reference developed by Kloss in 1966 as well Smolicz's 'core value' theory (developed at the end of the seventies in Australia) to account for inter-ethnic differences in the rate of ethnic language maintenance and shift.

The discussion of factors promoting or discouraging language maintenance and shift becomes very complex, partly because it is impossible to create laboratory conditions to pin down and measure variable factors of language use in society. Family cohesion and its intricate linguistic and cultural interconnection with regional identity appears to be, in the Italian case, among the crucial factors in L1 use (Bettoni, 1981; Clyne, 1991:93).

This concept is further refined (Clyne, op. cit.:113) in the light of data from the 1983 ABS Survey and the 1986 Census. For older established groups such as the Italian, that 'It is social communication within the extended family, not necessarily in the home, that maintains the language. Two important variables in community language use are then the presence of an extended family — especially grandparents — within easy reach, and the cohabitation of the extended family'. This is borne out in G. and H. Andreoni's interviews for this profile (see below).

The Italian-speaking community, whichever the frame used, shows a relatively low rate of language shift in the first generation and a reasonably high level of language retention, or at least identification with the language, in the second generation and hence a generous helping of 'ethnolinguistic vitality' used in Clyne's expanded sense, (and rather loosely here). Interest in studying the language, despite (or perhaps because of?) the fragmentation and strength of the dialects and local/regional varieties within the family, appears to be high not only within the community itself but also along its interconnections with other communities and the mainstream, as demonstrated in Table 7.1 above.

7.3.1 Language Maintenance and Language Shift in the First Generation

There is a marked tendency for Italian migrants to retain their language of origin, whether standard Italian or another vernacular. This is an indicator of the high value placed on language by the Italian ancestry group, as happens with other Mediterranean ancestries compared, for instance, with Northern European ones. The estimates of speakers vary considerably but they are all well above the 400,000 mark.

In the 1976-1986 decade, however, there seems to have been a 7.5% drop in the overall number of speakers of Italian. Apart from demographic factors such as decreasing immigration, death and birth rates, this may be due in part to the 'change in the wording of the language question from "languages regularly used" to "home language(s)" ' (op. cit.:63). Had the question enquired about language use beyond the home into the social domain the number of speakers may have been higher (Pauwels 1991) as the 1983 ABS language survey shows.

At 89.6%, the Italian-born rank among the first six in the language maintenance scale after the Vietnamese, Lebanese, Greek, Turkish and Yugoslav-born (Clyne and Jaehrling, 1989:64).

The rate of shift among the Italian born to English only has, predicably, increased in the 1976-1986 decade but not dramatically. The increase in language shift with increasing period of residence is fairly consistent across languages as shown by Clyne and Jaehrling (Greek is an exception here) compared with 1976.

In 1986 the States with the highest rates of shift in the first generation are, as in 1976, those with the lowest concentration of speakers such as Tasmania (the highest shift), the Northern Territory and the ACT (the fastest rates of shift) and Queensland. The lowest shift in 1986 occurs Victoria; it was in South Australia in 1976.

	Regular users of Italian 1976	Language Shift in Italian-born 1976 (%)	Speak Italian at home 1986	Language Shift in Italian-born 1986 (%)
NSW	124,422	7.44	113,203	11.0
Victoria	182,862	5.26	178,097	8.9
Queensland	31,746	8.60	26,115	15.9
Western Australia	46,775	6.25	43,590	11.1
South Australia	50,901	4.99	48,179	9.8
Tasmania	2,298	13.99	1,590	23.2
Northern Territory	1,378	8.89	1,040	19.2
ACT	4,228	6.68	3,951	15.6
Australia	444,672	6.26	415,765	10.5

Table 7.3
Speakers of Italian and first generation shift in 1976 and 1986
Sources: Clyne 1982; Clyne and Jaehrling 1989

Italian was, after English, the second most regularly used language in 1976 in all mainland States. In Tasmania and the ACT it came third after German and in the Northern Territory after the Aboriginal languages and Greek. A decade later, in 1986, Italian consolidates its position and is, after English, the second most common language spoken at home in all the mainland States as well as in the ACT.

7.3.2 Use of English and Dialect Among Speakers of Italian

Looking at language shift from the complementary angle it must be acknowledged that the majority of migrants learn English as a second (and sometimes third) language to varying degrees of competence. Only a small minority of the Italian-born (2.2% males and 6.3% females) report speaking English 'Not at all'. At the other end of this spectrum we find 10.5% of Italian-born who speak only English at home, especially when the marriage partners come from a different linguistic background. The great majority then are to be considered practising bilinguals since over 60% reported speaking English well or very well and 23.5% spoke English 'Not well' while at the same time almost 90% of the Italian-born continue using Italian at home. Similarly the second and further generations who, generally, learn English as their first language also learn their home language to some extent.

Italians in Australia will connect their identity and cultural allegiance with their region, town or village of origin especially when defining themselves within the family and the ethnic community. In such contexts they will be first Sicilians, Friulians or Molfettesi or else Italian-Egyptians or Italian-Maltese, Istriani and so on. The language spoken at home or with friends where the situation allows it (i.e. when they all share or understand it well) will reflect those origins more often than not.

When the definition is vis-a-vis other ethnic communities or as a part of the broad Australian community (as happens, for instance, when compiling the Census form) then the 'Italian' label is prevalent and quite unproblematic, whether it refers to place or to language. What we have is a rich repertoire of languages existing within the community and each individual, used according to need and situation, with a varying degree of competence. The repertoire within the community as a whole can be as differentiated as in Italy itself: Standard Italian and its regional-local variants, dialects belonging with Italian system with or without a unified literary standard (e.g. Venetian, Sicilian), Romance dialects not belonging with Italian, non-Romance regional languages, languages which are official languages elsewhere (German, Slovenian) and so on.

In Australia there are also home-grown varieties of Italian variously called Australitalian (Andreoni: 1967 and 1971) or Italo-Australian, which have not yet formed 'sufficiently stable and accepted norms ... [and are a] rather flexible way of speaking which allows bilinguals to transfer from English into Italian or into the dialect any elements ... according to need and taste' (Bettoni, 1985:58). Transfer obeys rules (it is systematic and not haphazard) as Bettoni herself explains in a more recent article (1989). Some recent examples will be found below, as confirmation of the lively and contemporary nature of these varieties.

7.3.3 The Second Generation

The numbers of the second and third generations have, of course, been increasing even though immigration from Italy is barely noticeable. In 1976 people born in Australia with at least one parent born in Italy numbered 240,000 (Rosoli 1989:21). The numbers increased to 285,000 in 1981, and to over 300,000 in 1986

(BIR 1990:6), and are actually higher because Italian ethnic people who were not born in Italy are not included in this count by ABS.

Many of the second generation have made efforts to learn their home language in order to talk to their grandparents or visiting relatives, or in order to travel to the country of their parents. Efforts towards language maintenance are undertaken by the second generation in schools and universities together with their non-Italian background peers who also wish to learn Italian.

7.3.4 Language Retention After the First Generation

In parallel with language maintenance it is commonplace to see in the linguistics literature references to its complementary terms — language shift, language attrition , language erosion or reduction — in reference to processes of change in the language of immigrant minorities. For instance, talking about Italian in the USA Saltarelli (1986:105-108) maintains that '... of the entire group [Spanish, French, German and Italian] Italian is the language that suffers the greatest reduction in third generation speakers'. Studies such as Bettoni's (1991:384-385) *Language shift and morphological attrition among second generation Italo-Australians* address similar issues.

The focus on the language and what happens to it across generations may, however, trigger unintended assumptions. Thus, in order to speak of reduction or erosion of the Italian language of a second or third generation speaker one needs to assume that the speaker's language was, at some earlier point, better or more wholesome and complete than it is now. Now, while the case of shift, reduction and so on may be demonstrable with reference to the first generation speakers, it is less demonstrable with second generation speakers. It would be especially difficult to demonstrate in the case of younger siblings or children from exogamous marriages, let alone the third generation who may have had sporadic and negligible exposure to or interaction in the language. Thus collapsing under 'attrition' both the process of 'forgetting' and 'failure to acquire' can, as Bettoni acknowledges in her study (ibid.), 'create some confusion'. In fact she concludes, that:

> [W]hen the focus is on the individual, it is a process of language acquisition which ... in the case of the younger children has been interrupted at varying stages after a favourable start in their younger years. In this sense, rather than sliding down the attritional continuum, individual children should be seen as climbing up.

This particular viewpoint on shift and attrition is valuable because of its implications for language policies and teaching practice. The policy maker and the school should, then, assist the children to 'climb up' in their acquisition of the ancestral language rather than presume they already possess a (home) language or that they have forgotten it.

For this reason it is perhaps appropriate to present statistics on language change across generations under the .heading 'language retention' following the demographer Price who, in matching language and declared ancestry over three generations observed that 'it is plain that some ethnic groups display great

tenacity in retaining their ethnic language' (1990:57-64). Abstracting from Price's table and comparing percentages across selected ancestry groups, it transpires that the Italian ancestry group, while not amongst the very first, is remarkable in its language retention which is well above the average for all NESB (Non English speaking Background) groups. Ancestry also has the advantage of disregarding birthplace.

Ancestry	I's %	II's %	II1/2's %	III's % (adjusted)	% III+'s in ethnic group
Chinese	81.9	66.4	22.7	16.6	3.7
Chinese Mix	30.6	13.1	3.5	0.6	1.5
Greek	92.2	88.3	56.6	41.0	3.3
Greek Mix	31.4	34.9	11.4	3.6	28.2
German	61.1	27.3	3.7	1.3	44.9
German Mix	14.5	9.6	2.5	0.4	68.8
Italian	88.0	70.0	31.7	20.1	4.4
Italian Mix	26.4	25.4	6.7	2.4	33.8
NESB	75.5	62.4	22.7	13.8	14.1
NESB Mix	26.0	18.1	3.7	1.1	51.8

Table 7.4
Language Retention, Ancestry and Generation
(Persons aged 5 and over speaking ethnic language at home in 1986)
Notes: I's, = first generation(born abroad); II's= second generation (born in Australia with both parents from abroad); II1/2's = (born in Australia with one parent born abroad and one born in Australia); III+ (born in Australia of two Australian-born parents and includes 3rd, 4th and other generations)
Mix = mixed ethnic origin
Source: Price (1990)

The tendency to retain the ancestral languages and dialects remains remarkable in the Australian-born with Italian ancestry. It is amongst the highest, with the Greek ancestral group, in all generations reported (Table 7.4) as Price noticed: 'The Italian III+ proportion - 20.1 - is clearly significant; with a relatively low proportion of persons in the III+ group it seems certain that language retention by 3rd, 4th and later generation Italians is higher than in the other ethnic groups' (ibid.). (The groups referred to were Danish, French, Slovene and Dutch.)

7.3.5 School Registration and Language Census

The facts above should be considered by language planning officers in the school systems who, thanks to computerisation, are now in a position to collect language histories of pupils. However, it may well be that the presence of second and third generation Italian children within schools is underestimated, and thus their language needs may be overlooked in policy and practice.

In NSW, for instance according to the Department of School Education (1992a:3), the School Census June 1991 reports that 5.4% of the NESB school population are of Italian speaking background. This proportion represents 7,413 students which, added to a further 6,839 reported for the Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of Sydney (Abdoolcader, 1988:5), totals just over 14,000 Italian background children in mainstream schools. The 1986 census, on the other hand, reported approximately 30,000 second generation Italian between the ages of 0 and 14 in NSW (cf. Bureau of Immigration statistics, 1990:7). Thus about 50% of the school-age Italian background children in NSW are either not going to school, or have moved out of the State or flooded into the Independent schools! Since none of

these is a plausible explanation it must be concluded that there is some severe under-reporting of the Italian background presence in mainstream schools.

This could be partly attributed, perhaps, to the way information is collected by the Department of School Education at entry point. For instance, the school registration form in NSW (DSE OASIS Data Entry Form SA2-01) asks parents to enter the 'Main Language Spoken at Home' (singular; only one space is provided). The form also asks the same question for the enrolling student. A further question asked of the student regards 'Other Language in which Student Can Function'. This question can be interpreted in a number of ways and is unnecessarily limiting. It may not draw out the language information as it does not allow for extended family situations (e.g. including grandparents) and it assumes same-language background parents. The child may speak different language/s with different parents or grandparents.

Such instruments for data collection need refinement. Registration forms may ask, for each parent, what the main language/s used at home may be, and which language/s the child is *exposed to* within the family (including grandparents), rather than the restrictive 'Language in which the Student Can Function', and provide appropriate spaces in the form to enter information.

7.4 Social Environment and Italian

Social environment covers a multitude of notions. The following items were identified in the literature and the interviews as important in understanding the use of Italian in Australia: gender, age, religion, marriage, welfare, visual images, Italian clubs, and festivals and the arts, were all deemed important either in interviews or in the literature researched for this project. One can only present a small sample of the discussion.

7.4.1 Italian, Dialect and the Significance of Place

Place is a key element in language use and teaching. This is so in both Australia and Italy. The dynamics of the connections between these two kinds of regionalisms make for a very complex picture. This is not really yet fully understood with reference to its impact on the teaching of Italian in Australia.

Regionalism in Italy has created a whole range of rich cultures and dialects which make up the tapestry of Italian society. Indeed, for many the regional, town or district identity is more significant that any notion of Italianness. Given chain migration to Australia, many relatives and friends from the same place have re-established themselves in one place in Australia.

Shifts in policy of regional governments in Italy have been re-establishing links between regions and migrants, clubs, monthly newspapers, enticements to return to Italy, housing loans etc. This pressure can be more readily felt due to the thriving Italian economy and the reduction of those pressures that originally gave rise to mass migration post World War II.

Many members of these Italian communities in Australia, as has been said, speak a dialect. The status, importance and legitimacy of these dialects has not been supported in the education systems set up to teach Italian. Indeed speakers of dialect have often been made to feel that this is a handicap to those wishing to study Italian, that it is a mark of low social class. The return trip to the region of origin and the work of the regions in promoting their dialect and culture directly here in Australia are among the factors in the increasing pride in dialect speakers.

Loyalty to place has contributed to the way that the richness of cultural and linguistic traditions have survived migration, but in some cases the ancient Italian based rivalries that define boundaries of language and culture have also survived. Many consider that rivalries, not only regionally inspired but also those driven by Italian based political rivalries, are fading as the Italian community in Australia collectively ages.

The Italian experience of language teaching in Australia and the support, infrastructure and resources available is largely determined by where the Italian community is located. Location in a capital city is a distinct advantage.

7.4.2 Dialect and School

From the interviews, questionnaire and readings it would appear that very little is known about the language skills the Italian language learner brings to the classroom. The information has not been collected in any systematic way which must make it difficult for the planning of the Italian language classroom and the development of materials.

Only one community based language school was able to supply information on the ability of their language learners to speak dialect. It serves to illustrate the complexity of the issue: the CIAC, ACT which supplied the following information:

Percentage of students able to understand and speak a dialect: *Venetian: 5%; Roman: 3%; Calabrian: 7%.*

Percentage of students able to understand a dialect:
Venetian: 5%; Roman: 3%; Calabrian: 7%.

Where the response is given by the students themselves 'dialect' does not figure prominently either. Table 5.4 shows, for instance, that Italian background students of Italian mostly refer to the language used at home as 'Italian' (26.9% of the sample) rather than 'an Italian dialect' (10.3%).

7.4.3 Australitalian

The existence of a particular variety of Italian in Australia has been documented since the late sixties (Andreoni op. cit.; see also the work of Leoni, 1988; 1991). Debate about its range and legitimacy has continued ever since. (See for example Di Biase, B. and B. Paltridge (eds) 1985.) Many of the interviews undertaken for this research have recorded examples that could be used as evidence of the existence of Australitalian. Few of the interviewees were aware of their extended use of this particular variety of Italian. The following examples, which involve Italianised English words (e.g. *la fornitura*) in place of Italian words (*le mobili* 'furniture'), will suffice to make the point. Many words were repeated on several occasions and in different localities.

Abbiamo salvato un po di soldi (Transcript 16:2)
Abbiamo trovato la fornitura. (Transcript 3:4)
Bissinisse (multiple times) (Transcript 28:1)
E' protetto dal Bordo (Transcript 27:4)
Ho fatto tagliare il bosco, ho fatto la farma (Transcript 3:3)
Ho pentato prima il soffitto (Transcript 46:11)
La macchina che picca (Transcript 27:12)
La macchina che stringa (Transcript 27:13)
Le sticche di foglie (Transcript 27:12)
Ma io avevo dette da pagare (Transcript 12:1)
Membro statale (Transcript 28:1)
Quello della TV che dice che sono draghe è matto (referring to hemp) (Transcript 34:9)
Sono bordato in una famiglia (Transcript 14:1)

This use of language is not just attributable to a confusion between Italian and English. Examples were also found of the same kind of use of Australian words in dialects that were believed by the speakers to be unaffected by their Australian surroundings.

Evidence of Italian being adapted to the Australian context was also found in the changing of the spelling of surnames, in an attempt to assist the English speaker to get the pronunciation of the name closer to the Italian. An alternative to this is to change the spelling of the Italian family name so that it reflects the incorrect pronunciation of the English speaker (Transcript 25:4).

A Molfettese interviewed for the survey explains what is involved in maintaining the use of a particular dialect in Australia and what drives communities to invest that level of energy in its maintenance:

Il molfettese è capito dai nostri figli della prima, seconda e anche terza generazione. Non al 100%. Se la nonna parla al pronipote, la capisce al 40% diciamo. Molti non sanno rispondere ma lo capiscono bene. Solo il dialetto. L'italiano è morto.
Translation: The Molfettese dialect is understood by our first, second and also third generations. Not 100% of it. If grandmother talks to her great nephew, he understands 40% of what she says. Many are not able to answer but they understand well. Only the dialect. Italian is dead.

The role of the grandmother and in this case the great grandmother in language maintenance is proudly declared; nor can this role be separated from cultural survival.

> *I miei nipoti parlano molfettese perché ci sono io in casa e lo parlano. Io ci ho detto prima a lui quando è venuto in casa: figlio mio io parlo molfettese, io faccio le usanze molfettesi; la vera cucina è molfettese. ... Io dico fin quando si chiudono i miei occhi, io non cambio niente della nostra tradizione, della chiesa, di tutto. Non cambio.*
> Translation: My nephews speak Molfettese dialect because I am here and they speak it. I said to my son-in-law when he first came to this house: my son I speak Molfettese; I follow the Molfettese way of life; the true Molfettese cuisine. ... I say that for as long as I live, our traditions, our religion, will not change, nothing will change. I will not change.

(Readers might like to know that Molfetta is a medium-sized Southern township about 30 km north of Bari in Puglia.) Not all Italian teachers are happy to accept that sometimes dialect and the cultural traditions that underpin it can be stronger than anything taught in class:

Such tensions about the role and status of dialect must impact on the Italian language classroom especially when language maintenance is one of the objectives.

7.4.4 Dialect and Language Maintenance

The concept of language maintenance in school with reference to dialect and varieties needs further discussion at a professional and academic level as it still attracts a range of differing opinions. Asking questions pertinent to the case described above may help advance the discussion a little. Thus, should the school's 'language maintenance objective' attempt to salvage the dialect of the children of this Molfettese family (who understand '40%' of this dialect). If so, how would it broach the issue. Indeed, even in the unlikely event that the school decided that it should, would it be able to find a teacher of that dialect?

When these Molfettese speakers talked to the interviewer they did so (judging from the transcript excerpt) in a very accessible and fluent Italian — which is clearly one of the languages maintained in this family despite protestations about its presumed death. In fact, this family would need their Italian for a different function, i.e. to be able to communicate to non-Molfettese Italians and identify themselves as members of the wider Italian-Australian community — precisely as they did with the interviewer. Perhaps the children, along with the dialect, also acquired 40 or 30 or whatever per cent Italian at home.

Italian is then the common language, the *lingua franca* of most dialect speakers who have migrated from any Italian region and those of Italian parentage who came from other countries such as Egypt, Malta, Switzerland etc. That common language and its socio-geographical varieties can be recognised as 'community language': the Italian used in community radio and other media including newspapers, in community gatherings and celebrations, in Italian language films,

magazines and so on, all of which circulate in the Italian speech community at large.

It is also the language that makes it possible for the Australian-born generations to maintain the international connection with Italy and Europe and with any other part of the world where an Italian speech community exists and wherever Italian is studied. Given the limited resources, human and financial, that is the language that should be targeted for maintenance and literacy efforts in the school setting.

None of the above means, on the other hand, that dialects or local vernaculars and varieties should be disregarded nor looked down upon, but rather as part of the undeniable wealth of the language resources of Australia, worthy of consideration, care, and study.

7.4.5 Teachers, Dialect and Australitalian

Aside from collecting statistics on dialect speakers across schools, what really matters is that the classroom teacher should be aware of any language resources in her/his own classroom, have a positive attitude towards them and make use of such resources to the pupils' best advantage. As Clyne explains

> Like children whose speech is marked by large scale transference from English, dialect-speaking children are often ashamed (or made to feel ashamed) of their home variety — something which runs counter to the purpose of community language programs.
> The *different function* but equal validity of dialect and standard need to be clarified; children must be given the opportunity to use dialect as a means of transition to standard, and, where possible, the differences should be explained... (1987:68).

An appropriate response by teachers of Italian to Italian varieties and dialects, including what has been called above Australitalian which Clyne (ibid.) calls 'mixed varieties' (a common phenomenon among bilinguals the world over), would require some pre-service study of sociolinguistics and Italian dialectology, areas which are, unfortunately, not present in most of the university departments offering Italian in Australia. Where pre-service studies do not include dialectology and variation studies these could and should be broached, with expert help, in the course of dedicated in-service for teachers of Italian.

7.4.6 Italian in Rural Areas

Many Italian communities came to be established outside the capital cities in some of the most isolated parts of rural Australia. During the period of mass Italian migration in the fifties and sixties, many Italian migrants were sent to rural areas under contracts which required them to work there for two years. Many stayed on and the community grew through the process of chain migration.

Among the people interviewed for this Profile were members of Italian communities who had been, or were still, critical players in the following

rural industries: Cattle, cleaning/ housework, construction work, cornerstore/delicatessen, dairy farming and cheese production, fishing, flax mills, forestry and mills, goldmining, hotel/ motel, mango farms, market gardens, orchards, pineapple farms, railways, restaurant, sawmills, sugar cane, timber cutting and tobacco. These people had worked or were working in the following locations: Atherton Tablelands, Broken Hill, Caboolture, Gulf of Carpentaria, Innisfail, Kalgoorlie, Katherine, Mareeba, Mt Gambier, Myrtleford, Port Pirie, and Shepparton.

Although many have now retired, they still wish to put on record the difficulties of building up the above industries often from nothing, with very little support and at great personal cost.

> *il taglio della canna io credo sia il lavoro piú duro, sporco e miserabile di qualsiasi altro (Transcript 26:2), é per condannati* (Transcript 27:2).
> Translation: I think that cane cutting is the toughest, dirtiest, and most wretched job in the world. It's convict work.
> *Gl'italiani quando sono venuti qui, sono andati tutti nel bosco a tagliare i pini, perché a quei tempi [anni 50] si tagliava a mano con la sega a due* (Transcript 34:7).
> Translation: Italians settled here and went into the forests to cut pines, because in those days [the 50s] we used to cut timber by hand, two people per saw.

Little wonder, with such work histories, that only when the first wave of migrants is approaching or in retirement, that thoughts turn to organising Italian classes in the community.

There are of course many others who also played a critical role in the development of Australian industries but have since moved on. This is certainly true of mining towns such as Mt Isa. Where once there was a large Italian-born population, the 1986 census records that there were then only 131 residents born in Italy out of a population of 23,927.

Italians in Innisfail recorded their presence and contributions to the Northern Queensland sugar industry by erecting a statue in Carrara marble of a sugar cane-cutter with a cane knife and a canvas water bag. The inscription reads: *UBI BENE IBI PATRIA.* Translation: Where there is prosperity there is the homeland. This statue and inscription affirm that Italians are here to stay as long as they continue to prosper.

It was stated in an interview that in the 1950s only 15-16% of the sugar-cane farms of the region were owned by Italians. In the 1990s 85% of the sugar-cane farms are owned by Italians or their descendants. That change of status and the price paid to achieve it are visually recorded with this statue.

Italian communities in rural Australia have been involved in many initiatives to support and foster the teaching of Italian. The range of places in rural Australia teaching Italian classes attest to the Italian communities' skills and perseverance in the face of their particular linguistic and cultural isolation.

> People [in rural areas] are starting to look at putting community languages into their own communities, by starting to run [language] classes (Transcript 15:10).

7.4.7 Gender

Many of the women interviewed spoke little or no English even after decades in Australia. This was a pattern repeated in all States, especially in rural areas. From the point of view of language maintenance, this gives the women an important role as keepers of the language, creating a reason for Italian or dialect to continue to be used.

Some of the reasons for not learning English in Australia have to do with gender specific work roles. For example the women were almost never, as far as the research could determine, expected to participate in sugar cane cutting. Where women were not in the paid workforce, they were less likely to come into contact with English speakers. In some parts of Australia, it is still quite possible to live without any English at all. In some paid employment it is possible to spend one's entire working life without needing to use English.

> *Sí, sí l'italiano è dappertutto nelle shoppe, per strada, dappertutto. Per far la spesa, anche al bar m'arrangio. Ma in bisinisse come fa lui, no.* (Transcript 27:10).
> Translation: Yes, Italian is spoken everywhere, in the shops, in the street. For shopping, even at the pub, I get by. But not for work as he does.

One husband argued that having survived for thirty five years in Australia without English, there was no need for his wife to attend English classes even if she wished to do so.

During the war, some Italian speaking women, like their English speaking fellow Australians, found that they had to do the 'man's' work. This they did in some very physically demanding industries. Many of these stories have yet to be written. One of the reasons for this is that the key players feel comfortable talking about their experiences only in Italian, not a language commonly spoken by many historians and sociologists.

Studies of Italian women in Australia are starting to reach into questions of social and personal identity. For example there are the beginnings of research into the sexuality, ethnicity, and more recently lesbianism (Pallotta-Chiarolli 1989a; 1989b; 1991).

If the researcher speaks and reads only English then he or she can only research a limited sample or be aware of similar research in English speaking countries. This limitation in the researcher is likely to limit and skew the research outcomes. The need to broaden one's research base and networks becomes another incentive to learn Italian.

7.4.8 Religion

Other important keepers of the Italian language in Australia are various religious orders. For example, the Scalabrini fathers run old people's homes where Italian and Italian dialect are in constant use.

Catholic primary schools in both urban and rural areas are much more likely than any other kind of school to be offering Italian language classes. This a particularly valuable service when the children would otherwise get no other exposure to a language other than English, and it has extended the range of schools and numbers of students being exposed to Italian quite dramatically. This is largely through the insertion classes. It has to be recognised that Catholic schools have acted as an important player in the considerable diffusion of Italian in Australia.

Religious ceremonies conducted in Italian play an important part in providing a forum for the use of Italian of a more formal kind as well as social interchange in Italian after the ceremonies. Italian religious festivals such as those held in Port Pirie for the Madonna dei Martiri provide a significant focus for the local Italian community and a very public affirmation of the role of Italians and Italian in a particular community.

7.4.9 Non-Italian Catholic Clergy and Other Christians

Many priests have made the effort to learn Italian and conduct ceremonies in Italian especially since the use of Latin was discouraged. For some Italian migrants the shift from Latin to English would have been from the familiar and the traditional to the unfamiliar and the foreign. Hence the extended use of Italian in the Catholic Church even when it is a second language for the priest.

Knowledge of Italian by the non-Italian Catholic clergy is aided by the fact that many clerics study in Rome, or join Italian religious orders with headquarters in Italy. The Maltese priests and nuns working in Australia are nearly all fluent Italian speakers and in several parishes (e.g. the Capuchins of Leichhardt and the Franciscans of Warrawong) both Italian and Maltese priests serve the Italian community.

Religious sects such as the Seventh Day Adventist and Jehovah's Witnesses make wide use of Italian in their printed propaganda, on radio and religious meetings targeting the Italian speaking ethnic group (G. Hull, personal communication).

7.4.10 Intermarriage

Intermarriage between Italian and English speakers was variously explained to the researchers as the reason for language loss in the second generation of Italians and equally the motivation especially for adult learners to study Italian. The English speakers who enter an Italian speaking family require Italian to communicate with the non English speakers, usually the older

generation but also to maintain contact with other members of the extended family who are not living in English speaking countries. These family members may reside in Italy or they may be in other countries of Italian migration such as Argentina. To be able to share a language is an essential element of a core value which is the maintenance of the extended family in spite of geographic and linguistic differences.

7.4.11 Age

Since there are now increasing numbers of elderly people in the Italian speaking community, there is pressure on institutions to meet their needs. Even Italians who had acquired a working knowledge of English find that as they age they revert to their first language or dialect. Workers in welfare and other caring professions will find increasingly that in areas with high concentrations of Italian migrants they will need to have a working knowledge of Italian in order to do their jobs.

7.4.12 Class

Hierarchical notions of class, imported from Italian society, have had a disproportionate influence on attitudes towards Italian and the kind of Italian taught in Australia. The leaders of Italian communities have tended to be those with greater educational qualifications, speakers of standard Italian perhaps with some regional intonation.

7.4.13 Looking at Origins

Sophisticated and complex local histories are beginning to emerge and will increase as second and third generation Italians explore their own background and reclaim their linguistic heritage. An example of this is the work of Loretta Baldassar in Perth. She has researched from an anthropological perspective the migration experiences of Italians from the Friuli area.

The history of the Italian community in Fremantle recently completed by Michal and Richard Bosworth (1992) gives some indication of the richness of sources, experiences and connections which Australia-wide have gone largely unrecorded.

Undealt with business also is the memory of the treatment, by Australians, Italians experienced during their first years in Australia. For some, it continues to sour relations years later.

Were fewer cultural and language barriers in the way it would be discovered that this at the time was an experience not exclusive to Italians. One only has to read Facey's *A Fortunate Life*. (1981). Many are not convinced that the racism experienced no longer exists and indeed have absorbed some of the same racist responses. Second and third generation Italians have to deal with rather than

just absorb, the outcome of these experiences and memories. To do this they need to have Italian so that they can research primary sources themselves.

Some histories have only been taped and are therefore difficult to access and likely to be lost to the wider community — stories like those told to the researchers by Robyn Marlowe (née Pedracini) whose great grandfather came to the Gulf of Carpentaria for gold mining from Piedmont, and subsequently managed a hotel and a cattle ranch of some 300 square miles. Such a history makes her keen to study Italian if it were available. These stories belong to all Australians.

There are organisations designed to assist Italian communities in recording their family histories. Organisations such as the Western Australian Genealogical Society Inc. are beginning to appreciate the depth of interest in retracing migration steps not only to the British Isles but to Italy. Such societies need the linguistic skills to assist their members.

People expert in using computer programs designed to facilitate the task of recording and researching family histories also have a role to play. Franco Smargiassi of Albany proposes an Australia wide network of Italian families and communities recording their histories in a way that ensures that the information becomes part of Australia's history.

The Australian Bicentennial Foundation has given the State Library of New South Wales and the NSW Italian Historical Society funds to collect 'papers, diaries, photographs and business records that will fill the gaps of the State's collective history — social and cultural' (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 July 1991:4).

Schools are beginning to use and to collect oral histories to learn more about local history and as an incentive to use and learn more Italian or dialect. Examples of these projects are, at secondary level, the Marian College and Myrtleford High School Year 11 Local History Project which was part of the Victorian 150th anniversary celebrations. This project focused largely on the experiences of Italians in the prisoner of war camp at Whorouly. At primary level, another model oral history project was undertaken by the Mirboo North Primary School in Victoria, funded through Ministerial Advisory Council on Migrant and Multicultural Education and the Victorian Ministry of Education. Published around 1987, it is called *Nella's Lunchbox* and records the histories of the Italian potato farmers in this area of Northern Victoria. Some of the interviews were conducted and recorded in dialect. Information designed to assist schools in planning and conducting oral histories in non-English speaking background rural communities is found in *Immigrants in the Bush* (Wilton 1988-89).

Others such as Olga Mattiassi (1988) have published their migration stories in both English and Italian to ensure that they are accessible to a wider audience. The Dante Alighieri society in Darwin, through the efforts of Tarquinio Mezzadri, in 1988 wrote the tragic history of the Victoria Peninsula Settlement and the role of an Italian missionary there. Cultural and climatic mismatch is a theme that pervades many such stories, lessons Australia continues to have to relearn. The history of Diego Bernacchi's initiatives on Maria Island off Tasmania were written up by the Italian Vice Consul Bini-Malate in 1988, but are now out of print. Without such evidence in print, who would believe, for

example, the difficulties experienced by the Italian community in Hobart when they tried to erect a monument to record the visit of Garibaldi to Tasmania in 1853 (ICWA 1982b:1). These are historical treasures not to be lost, part of the fabric of the Italian community in Australia.

One of the major forces for the use and revival of Italian across Australia is to put the record straight. This is a major preoccupation of any ageing community but particularly when much of its history has not been recorded. These histories were found in both Italian and English, published and unpublished, oral, local and hidden histories. They were designed variously to inform the family, the community, and Australia as a whole, and for use in primary and secondary schools. If they could all be brought together, they would constitute a major resource for the study of Italian and the Italian community in Australia. Currently much of this material is kept in bottom drawers in family homes.

7.4.14 The Return Home

This very brief overview of the social context of Italian in Australia would not be complete without reference to the role of the return home. Lindsay Thompson provides in her book (1980) a focus on those who returned to Italy permanently after a time in Australia. Few Italians migrated to Australia in the 50s with a view to staying here permanently. Most envisaged working for a while, accumulating capital and returning to their own region. This was a very good reason for the continued use of Italian in the home and where possible formal Italian lessons either in school or outside school.

Many were not able to return to Italy within the time-frame envisaged and put down such permanent roots in Australia that return to Italy except for a visit was no longer a viable option. Such visits provided an informal Italian language immersion program which kept the linguistic skills of second and third generation Italians alive.

As many Italians reach retirement, there is a possibility of returning to Italy. This is facilitated now by the reciprocal arrangements for the payment of pensions between Italy and Australia. It remains a fact that many more pensions are paid from Italy to Australia than by Australia to Italy. Currently the figure is $A160 million in Australia's favour (Graziano Ceron, International Operation Branch, Department of Social Security, Hobart. 31/1/92, personal communication).

Many did not go back. Others having reached financial security cannot decide where they belong. Anna Maria dell'Oso, for example, records the experiences of her family through her creative writing. (See Papellinas, G. *Homecoming;* and Baldassar, 1992, Thesis in progress, Department of Anthropology, UWA.)

Interviewees were asked if they were pleased overall with the decision to migrate from Italy to Australia. Some regretted the decision, others made the momentous decision to re-migrate to Italy but sometimes found that they were no longer able to settle there, too changed by the migration experience.

7.4.15 The Italian Festival and the Arts

The Italian Festival is a time when the Italian community puts itself on parade and adopts a very high profile. Where there is a strong arts component, this is likely also to include the use of Italian in performance and writings.

When both Italian and Australian regionalism are mixed, there can be a very creative outcome which can only benefit the promotion of Italian in Australia. For example in the program for the Italian Festival 1991 in Adelaide (Co-ordinating Italian Committee, 1991:3), of the nine items featured one was sponsored by the Umbria region, one was sponsored by the Lombardia region, one was organised by the Fogolar Furlan, and there was a photographic exhibition of Umbrians abroad.

Equally creative both culturally and linguistically was the twinning of Italians in Fremantle and a Sicilian town for the organisation of a festival in Fremantle and the visit of the street sculptor Professor Dominici.

Even without the backing of a festival there are artists using Italian who continue to provide a reason for the continued and creative use of Italian in Australia. There is a very strong group of Italian writers much supported by the network established by Gaetano Rando, Gennaro Cozzi, Pietro Tedeschi and others based at Wollongong University. (See the bibliography for a selection of the many works of Italian writers Rando has edited.) Italian writers writing in Italian have also received official recognition from the mainstream Australian literary world. Rosa Cappiello and Giovanni Andreoni have received literary awards for works written in Italian, e.g. NSW literary awards in 1985 and 1990.

Several Italian theatres in different capital cities present works by Italian writers from Italy and Australia. These creative works give legitimacy both to the Italian experience and the use of Italian in Australia. Exciting examples of Italian and the performing arts are the work of the Doppio Teatro in Adelaide, in which Teresa Crea (1992) wrote and directed 'A Nuptial Feast' (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 9/3/92). The most recent example of this is the work of Teresa Crea, and the libretto written by Anna Maria dell'Oso.

Italian in the performing arts has its own tradition in Australia. Indeed the earliest public use of the Italian language in Australia probably took the form of operatic performances. In the 1840s and 1850s 'Tuscan political émigré Count Girolamo Carandini, ... with his London-born wife, singer Maria Burgess, successfully implanted Italian opera as a popular form of entertainment in the Australian colonies' (Alcorso, 1992:13). The golden age of Australian opera that was to materialise in the following two decades meant mostly Italian opera (Hardie 1989:139).

7.4.16 The Italian Club and Community Associations

The Italian club or the regional club play an important role in maintaining the use of Italian. These are often the venue where lessons are held after school hours. Whilst their focus is largely on meeting the social needs of their members, they do provide in linguistic terms a domain for Italian language use. Instances

were found where the Italian club was established to create a place for the Italian language to be used and passed on to the next generation. In this the clubs have only partially been successful. The clubs are seen to be largely places for older men to gather, with women involved in fund-raising and tombola, whilst the whole family appears for parties and children frequent the club for their weekly Italian lessons.

Clubs, especially the larger ones in metropolitan areas, also have an important political function as they are seen, by the community and associations that may not have their own premises, as a natural venue for raising issues and demands with the Australian or Italian government, for meeting politicians and diplomats, special guests and artists from Italy. For instance, the APIA club in Sydney has often opened its premises to pensioners for key meetings with Australian and Italian politicians to discuss bilateral agreements and social security matters. The Sydney Italo-Australian women's association holds its regular meetings there, and so does the Comites (a committee representative of the whole community *vis-a-vis* the Italian government) for its open meetings.

Some of the metropolitan clubs are doing so well that they have also become an important provider of sport and recreation facilities and also employment for hundreds of people at the local level. Having understood and provided for local needs, they have been able to expand to impressive proportions, like the 35 year old Marconi Club in Sydney, well known nationally by soccer fans. Indeed there are similar clubs in Melbourne, Adelaide, Perth, Brisbane whether they are called Veneto Club, Abruzzi Club, Vizzini Club, Marco Polo or simply Italo-Australian or Fraternity Club.

7.4.17 Associations and the Italian Language Media

The list of clubs and associations would be far too long to reproduce here. However in order to give a faithful (rather than exhaustive) picture of the dimensions of this phenomenon for the purposes of this profile, a survey was undertaken during a period of seven weeks, from 23 April to 11 June, 1992, in order to gather current data regarding active associations, at least in so far as they advertised their activities on the Italian language media.

The major Italian language newspapers *La Fiamma*, issued twice a week, and *Il Globo*, issued on a weekly basis, and both with a fair degree of Australia-wide distribution were examined as well as the newer weekly *Il Mondo*, also issued on a weekly basis. These are not, of course, the only Italian language media.

The information collected from the three publications named above was put into a database according to the following categories;

Association name (where the name of the association was listed),
Type of Association (whether the association was a sporting club, a regional club or a religious club etc.),
Activity (what function or activity was being offered on a particular occasion, e.g. Mother's Day celebrations, wine and chestnut festival, festa della Repubblica, celebration of a particular patron Saint),

Activity type (whether the activity was social, cultural, educational, informative, recreational or of assistance to the Italian community).

Type of community association	NSW	QLD	SA	Tas	Vic	WA	ACT/NT	Total	%
Cultural/ Educational	12	2	2	1	5	2	1	25	8.9%
Ethnic/Regional	51	2	13	-	45	6	-	117	41.5%
Pensioners social and welfare	8	2	3	-	10	2	-	25	8.9%
Political Representation/ Migration	5	3	2	-	-	-	1	11	3.9%
Returned soldiers	11	2	3	-	9	-	-	25	8.9%
Social/Recreation/Sport	23	5	2	5	10	3	1	49	17.4%
Other	14	4	3	1	3	5	-	30	10.6%
Total	124	20	28	7	82	18	3	282	
Percent	44%	7.1%	9.9%	2.5%	29%	6.4%	1.1%		100%

Table 7.5
Types of Italian community associations and distribution by State
Source: data derived from announcements and articles in Italian Language media in Australia between end of April and early June 1992

In a period of just over six weeks, 282 different associations had generated 586 announcements of activities all over the States as recorded in 6 issues of *Il Globo*, 5 of *Il Mondo*, and 13 issues of *La Fiamma* from the end of April to early June.

The most popular events announced were Mother's Day with 95 mentions, followed by Republic Day (*Festa della Repubblica*) which falls on 2 June, with 43 mentions, followed by 20 mentions of collective trips to Canberra to see the 'Rubens and the Renaissance' exhibition at the National Gallery.

Of course a number of associations which did organise activities for those same or different purposes in the same period did not advertise the fact . Thus the number of associations is in fact higher than appears in Table 7.5. The State distribution, though largely representative of the true situation, may not be totally accurate especially since many associations outside large metropolitan areas do not rely on advertisements in the above mentioned media. Nevertheless the figures demonstrate the extent and variety of associations and activities in the Italian-speaking community where much of the communication exchanges would happen in some variety of Italian.

7.4.18 Arts and the Inter Ethnic Connection

The arts, figurative and performing arts particularly, are a great unifying force, a catalyst for identification and mutual appreciation, as they can easily communicate across and between ethnic boundaries as radio programs such as the ABC's *Music Deli* demonstrate.

When an initiative reflects a conjunction of general interest and community interest, the results are nothing short of exceptional as the following example shows: Florence and Sydney, with a ceremony at Palazzo Vecchio, became sister cities (*La Fiamma* 6 August 1992:1-2) at the same time as the 'Rubens and the Italian Renaissance' exhibition was being moved from Canberra to Melbourne. The exhibition, to which a number of Italian museums and galleries had

contributed valuable works, was extremely successful, according to National Gallery director Betty Churcher (*La Fiamma* 18 June 1992:34), and achieved over 240,000 visitors from all over Australia, with a significant participation of the Italian community.

Among other things the exhibition also provided a stimulus for studying Italian. Prue Evans (Education Department liaison with Gallery) pointed out that the event stimulated the development of materials for teachers of Italian in collaboration with the Embassy Italian language adviser, Dott. Gianfranco Caserta. Techniques for the presentation of works of art was also part of the study objectives (*La Fiamma* 18 June 1992:34).

7.4.19 Other Italian Language Media

An increasingly important area of use of Italian in the public domain is offered particularly by SBS Ethnic Radio and Multicultural TV programs broadcast in Italian. Ethnic Radio broadcasts are patently insufficient to cater for such a large and widespread speech community as the Italian one. With just one station, limited to the Melbourne and Sydney metropolitan areas and having to serve many other communities, it is inevitable that other smaller radio stations are operating to cater for these needs both in the metropolitan areas just mentioned and in most other capital cities. Ethnic radio Italian programs are insufficient in terms of hours (1.5 hours per day on average) and in terms of the time of broadcasting. Programming could help the community to promote language maintenance among the young people but ironically half of the programs are broadcast as young people are on their way between school and home.

Television (SBS TV) is now reaching many areas of Australia and has an important function not only as a source of information (Italianews is a particularly useful program) and entertainment in Italian but also as an instrument to assist language learning. This particular aspect seems to be rarely focused on by the channel. Other channels are much further behind in recognising that ethnic communities have certain needs that may not be fulfilled if all broadcasting is in English. And besides, broadcasters would do well to recognise that they can play a major role in the language education of all Australians.

7.4.20 Commercial and Productive Activities in Urban Centres

A bird's-eye survey of Italo-Australian productive, commercial and financial activities immediately reveals a robust contribution by the Italo-Australian network to the economic life of the nation: from the sugarcane fields, to the factory workers in manufacturing industry, to small and medium business, and further on the larger and successful Italo-Australian companies such as the Grollo Group in Melbourne or Transfield, the largest private enterprise entrepreneurial group in Australia (Cresciani,1992:140).

Since the economic theme is developed (to a limited extent) in the next chapter, only the broad results of a survey based on the Italian Chambers of Commerce

and Industry (ICCI) will be summarised here. The ICCI does not include among its members all Italo-Australian business since membership is voluntary, but, with its branches in Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth and Sydney it is broadly representative and indicative of the extent and range of economic activity within and beyond the community.

Accounting/Banking/Legal	168
Chambers of Commerce and exhibition organisers in Italy	23
Education, Cultural , Performing Arts, Media	15
Fashion, Accessories and Textiles/Jewellery	100
Food/Wine	112
Freight Forwarding	67
Govt. Departments	26
Import/Export	197
Manufacturing	218
Media/Research	21
Primary Industry	32
Services	186
Electronic design, Software	26
Travel and Transport	46
Other	45
TOTAL	1,282

Table 7.6
Italian Chambers of Commerce and Industry in Australia: Number of Members by broad type of activity

7.4.21 Perceptions and Images of Italians in the Media

The image Australian society forms of the Italians in Australia affects attitudes towards the study of Italian both for those who are of Italian background and those who are from a non-Italian speaking background. The power of images in the media and the consequent perceptions should not be underestimated.

Visual images in the print media indicate an ambivalence in the way Italians and Italy wish to project themselves here in Australia. There appear to be several trends. The promotion of Italian in Australia has to be at least conscious of which trend it is picking up on and the likely consequences for a language program.

The first trend is to emphasise the romantic. We thus have the advertising for the Achille Lauro run in a range of print media and on posters in travel agents in late 1991:

> The Italians have a very romantic streak. It runs the length of our decks ... Achille Lauro, the floating Italian paradise.

A combined advertisement for Alfa Romeo and the Hotel Intercontinental:

> Have an affair in Sydney with a stunning Italian (*Flight Deck*, July 1991:15).

There is another series of images which are about Italian food and good Italian cooks both male and female, likely to be somewhat round. Some writers use this

stereotype to project an image of New Wave Italian; one stereotype is replaced by another. This new Italian image is pitched at the business executive:

> Today's upscale Italian eateries are light years away from the old corner dives where you gave Luigi plenty of cheek and he gave you plenty of Chianti back. The new Armani brigades of pasta flingers rarely hail from as far down the Italian boot as Naples, the birthplace of most old-style Italo-Aussie dishes. Today's menus owe more to the rich industrial north, creeping down to that gourmet centre, Bologna, at the very southernmost. It's strictly hold the tomatoes down (Elizabeth King, *Flight Deck*, June 1991:51).

This marketing of things Italian, which impacts on the marketing of the Italian language, is of concern to those who would present a new image of Italy. The publication of the Italian Chamber of Commerce entitled *The Italian Touch*, has on its cover the touching hands from Michelangelo's *Creation* with a computer key-board inserted under the hands. The visual message is clear: Italy is about culture, the best, and modern technology, the best. The editorial wishes to focus on the Italy of the present distancing itself from Italy's past and Australia's Italian community.

> In most of us there is a 'pizzico' of romantic Italy. You know, the 'gondola', the 'bel canto' and the ruins of the Roman empire. We have a lot of reliable information on these matters from our neighbours, from school books and of course from Hollywood.
>
> There WAS such an Italy forty or fifty years ago. Today Italy is the fifth industrial power of the world. It has one of the highest standard of living and one of the highest paid workforces in the world. It is also one of the most misunderstood (Klein 1991:2).

The complexities of this historical ambivalence between Ancient Rome and Modern Italy (see Petrarca's *Canzone all'Italia*) are present in the visual images projected by Italians in Australia promoting Italy. Whilst rejecting ancient and romantic images of Italy and Italians, these are still used to sell Italian products. One can only speculate on the likely impact of such images and promotions on Italian language programs in Australia.

At times uncomfortable and ambivalent, the links between Italy and the Italian community in Australia remain and are not always subject to tidy marketing.

7.5 Impact of Italian and Italians on English in Australia

Many Italians recalled with bitterness the labels that were used to refer to Italians in Australia. 'Wogs' and 'Dagos' were universal but in Western Australia Italians were apparently called 'Dings'. The origins of this term were unknown.

More friendly examples of Italian influence in English often have to do with food and wild stabs at how an Italian word might be spelt in English.

There are regional variations on the many spellings of cappuccino. In Darwin it was made close to a cuppa: *cuppacino*. In Kalgoorlie it was *cappacino*. In Western Australia, WA Salvage, a chain of hardware and second-hand building materials used the stereotype of the thrifty hard-working Italian migrant to build an advertising campaign with the slogan: *SAVA DA MONI*. Alongside the slogan a picture of a rather portly Italian with a knotted handkerchief on his head, wearing a singlet.

Other adaptations of Italian attract the reader's attention either intentionally or unintentionally.

GOULASH WITH KNOCKY (designed to represent *Gnocchi*). Column 8, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 17 August 1991:1.
CATCH-A-TORY (an advertisement for Southwark beer written as Suth'ick, trying to get the right pronunciation for both the beer brand and the Italian word *cacciatore*).
MILD PANCETTA (delicatessen, Nambucca Heads, NSW. March 1992).

These examples and their reporting suggest that Italian is seen as an unthreatening and sometimes amusing language which increasingly belongs in Australia. This is a valuable asset for those who would increase the teaching of Italian to all sectors of Australian society.

'Now Luigi can become dinky-di and stay Italian' (headline of an article by Desmond O'Grady on the changes to Italian citizenship laws. *Sydney Morning Herald*. 21 January 1992:2).

8 ITALIAN IN THE WORLD CONTEXT

Italian cannot claim international use such as English, French, Spanish or Arabic can. However like Greek, Italian (or its predecessor Latin) has had an important influence in most of the languages of the Western World particularly in certain fields: medical and scientific terminology, jurisprudence and the law, music, figurative arts and other fine arts (cf. Bettoni and Lo Bianco 1989). Being the language of the Vatican, Italian has indirectly travelled the world over with the expansion of the Catholic Church.

8.1 Italian Speakers in the World

Today Italian has official status in four states — Italy, the Vatican, Switzerland and the tiny Republic of San Marino. Before 1936 it was also official in British Malta. Primarily Italian is the language of Italy, a country with a population of 57,676,000 people. Italy is, after Germany (62,358,000), the largest of the twelve-country European Community (CNEL - Emigrazione 1992:35). But it is not so much the nation state that creates the international strength of Italy, but the millions of Italian migrants, and increasingly, tourists and entrepreneurs. To these we should add the second and further generations who maintain affective, cultural, intellectual and commercial ties with the land of their parents and grandparents who left Italy when she was poor, and helped through their hard work, their suffering and fortunes to make Italy's active presence felt in many countries. Italy's internationalisation, as De Rita (1992:6-7) aptly puts it, begins with the migrants. Their contribution to Italy's strength in the world market is undeniable, even though it may be difficult to quantify.

Thus the presence of Italian communities and hence of the Italian language (as well as the dialects) in the world is pervasive. Recent calculations of the size of the Italian communities (data refer to official Italian statistics collected in 1986-87) total more than five million people outside Italy with large concentrations in Australia (see Chapter 7) and countries of the European Community (and also Switzerland) totalling over two million people; a further 1.8 million in Latin American countries, nearly half a million in the USA and Canada and about 100,000 scattered in African and Asian countries (Rosoli 1989:6).

Traditional migration from Italy as a means of shedding excess labour has scattered over 27 million Italians in these receiving areas since 1876. About 8.5 million of these have migrated since World War II. This phenomenon however came practically to an end in the mid-1970s when the number of people leaving the country dropped considerably and the number of returning migrants consistently equalled or exceeded those leaving (CSER 1988:7).

However, the Italian communities abroad (and particularly in Australia and the Americas) are quite stable and relatively large. In the USA alone where the 1980 census included an 'ancestry' question, over 12 million people identified themselves as having some degree of Italian ancestry; 8.3 million of these were third generation. A similar situation obtains in Argentina and other Latin

American countries, which leads Rosoli (1989:8) to estimate an Italian presence of about 30 million for the Americas.

As for the number of speakers of Italian outside Italy Vincent (1990: 273-4) quotes a figure of 3.9 million speakers in the USA which makes it the second largest linguistic minority after Hispano-Americans. The higher concentrations are found in New York (mainly Sicilian and other southern Italians) and in the San Francisco Bay area where northern and central Italians predominate. There is a strong presence of Italian language newspapers, radio stations and television programs. The cultural and also political influence of Italians is quite visible in many fields: Frank Capra to Al Pacino, Rocky Stallone in cinema; from Frank Sinatra to Madonna in popular music; or Mario Cuomo in politics or Lee Iacocca in industry, to cite just a few household names.

The growth of Italian language studies particularly in American tertiary institutions (see below) attests to the reawakening of interest of third generation Italian Americans in their linguistic heritage.

In the Americas and Australia Italian originated from underprivileged immigrants, as Vincent (ibid.) points out, but in Africa, specifically Ethiopia and Somalia and until recently Libya, 'Italian survives as a typical relic of a colonial situation'. The only documented instance of an Italian-based pidgin is found in Ethiopia, used between Europeans and locals, but also between speakers of mutually unintelligible indigenous languages.

Closer to the boundaries of the Italian state there are communities of speakers in many European countries, due to migration, totalling well over two million people in the United Kingdom, Germany, Switzerland, Belgium and Sweden. A special case, not due to migration, is the use of Italian by 250,000 inhabitants of the Swiss Canton, Ticino, as the language of administration and education, while Lombard is the local dialect. Italian is also official in two districts of Canton Grisons.

The local dialects of Corsica (population 200,000) are either Tuscan or Sardinian, but French has been the official language for over two centuries. Similarly there are communities in Istria and Dalmatia (ex-Yugoslavia) whose local language is Italian or an Italian-based dialect. Istria in particular has Italian language local newspapers, radio and schools. There remains to mention the ancient Republic of San Marino, within the Italian region of Emilia Romagna. Its 23,000 (estimate De Agostini 1991) inhabitants speak the Romagnolo dialect and use Italian as their language of administration and education.

In Malta Italian was official until 1936 when the British replaced it with the Italianate Maltese dialect. Italian remains an elite language, is still widely spoken, and plays an important role in education. Italian is current in the district of Nice and in the Principality of Monaco where the local dialect is Ligurian. Italian is also the traditional second language of Albania. Italian is also current to some extent in Tunisia, where there were over 100,000 Italians resident before 1950 (Hull, unpublished notes).

As a final point in this overview it must be said that Italy, having been up to the early 1970s a typical (if not the archetypical) country of emigration, has quickly become during the last decade a country which is receiving hundreds of thousands

of immigrants from the Middle East, northern African countries, some Asian countries such as Vietnam and the Philippines, and Latin American countries such as Chile and Argentina. Sometimes these are or have been refugees, but mostly they are economic migrants attracted by the strength of the Italian economy of the last two decades or so. Conservative estimates vary between one and two million immigrants, many of whom are learning Italian as a second language.

Even a rapid survey such as this cannot fail to reveal a considerable international network for a 'one-nation language' such as Italian, which would point to a healthy potential demand in the foreseeable future.

8.2 Italian Teaching in the World

Italian is taught in most of the countries of the western world on account of its historical and cultural importance but its presence in educational institutions has been growing in the last decade or so, particularly in countries such as the USA, Argentina and Australia which have a sizeable Italian community. Recent developments in the economic and political dimensions of international relations (the break up the former Soviet Union, European integration), as well as technological advances (the proliferation of satellites and other communication technologies), have also opened up new spaces for a language such as Italian. This is what emerges both from a series of studies and conferences promoted over a whole decade by a special Italian Government commission (Lo Cascio et al. 1991) and from the studies commissioned by the Agnelli Foundation (1992) which show that the demand for Italian studies is growing in other countries as well, albeit for different reasons.

8.2.1 Italian in Europe

Languages such as English and French, because of their traditional international dimension, and German because of its economic importance, are studied in more institutions than Italian, which is nevertheless well represented in many European countries. Spanish has now joined this group of strong languages within the European Community and can compete strongly thanks to the international status lent to it by the Latin American countries which speak it.

Nevertheless, the European Community's language policy considers the language of each member country as official and of an equal standing within the Community, which is thus decidedly moving towards mass multilingualism, encouraging it through special programs such as Lingua and Erasmus. In the United Kingdom, Italian historically occupies fourth place in English secondary schools. In technical courses (e.g. in Polytechnics) advanced students are often of Italian background. Beginner courses in Italian are continuing to grow despite reduction in staff. Funds are scarce, and it is often Italian in language departments which suffers, but not because of drops in demand. Indeed demand for Italian, especially as a second Modern Language, is growing (Lepschy et al. 1992).

In the other countries of the European Community, English is of course the dominant second language at all levels of instruction. Nevertheless Italian enjoys a relatively stable position among the first four or five foreign languages studied, e.g. in Germany the number of students of Italian is estimated at about 230,000 including students in the German equivalent of the British Open University where Italian is very popular (Neumeister 1992).

8.2.2 Italian in the Americas

Italian in the USA is characteristically studied more at tertiary (college and university) level than in primary and secondary schools. This reflects perhaps the re-awakening of interest in Italian in the third generation, which has kept demand growing gradually through the 1980s and most notably in the twenty-one universities that offer PhD awards in Italian (from 5,855 enrolments in 1981 to 7,437 in 1987). In that same year there were over 60,000 primary and secondary students of Italian in twenty-five states' public and private schools. This also represents an increase during the 1980s. Despite the incomplete response from colleges to surveys (only 358 out of 555 colleges responded), Lebano (1992) reports an astounding (compared with the lower levels) total of about 40,000 students of Italian in American tertiary institutions.

In Canada the dominant English/French bilingual policy tends to relegate other languages to the margin of the system. Nevertheless Italian is studied, particularly in the province of Ontario where the Canadian Italian community is mainly concentrated. Most students of Italian in the primary school Heritage Language Program are found in that province, as well as over 7,000 secondary students. At university level there is a broader distribution with twenty-five universities with about a hundred lecturers having over 5,000 students (Mollica 1992).

In Argentina, Italian as a secondary school subject was introduced only recently with the 1988 education reform. Before this the second languages that could be studied at that level were English and French. Scarce was the number of students in universities (about 100 between Cordoba and Buenos Aires). By 1989-90 there were 700 secondary schools teaching Italian with 800 teachers and 35,000 students.

Clearly, there was a demand which found no response in the official institutions before then. This fact can be confirmed both by the explosive growth within the first two years of the reform and by the great popularity of courses offered by the Dante Alighieri associations which counted 27,000 students in 1989 (Calcopietro and Michetti 1992).

8.2.3 Italian in Japan

There are two fundamental motivations for studying Italian in Japan. The first is cultural and the second is related to business and technology areas. The cultural

motivation is reflected in courses focusing on language and the Italian literary and artistic as well as musical and theatrical traditions. Such courses are well represented in Japanese university and well subscribed by students (Lo Cascio et al. 1991:10).

The second motivation finds expression both in the technical and economic faculties of Japanese universities, and in other areas, such as banks, industry and publishing. Special needs identified are the provision of specialists and materials in the areas of business Italian and Italian for the scientific and technical areas. The annual Italy-Japan volume of trade approached $US 9 billion in 1989.

This rapid international overview, which has not covered areas such as Eastern Europe and certain Middle Eastern countries where there is a presence of and demand for Italian courses, seems to show that to a considerable extent the 'international destiny' of Italian is not driven just by the attraction it exerts because it is 'the language of a great culture' and because of 'the world it expresses' (Simone 1989:167). There are also powerful affective motivations persisting well past the first generation in Italian communities abroad, and, in a smaller but significant way, by the economic interests generated by Italy's position in European and world trade.

8.3 Why Learn Italian?

It may be appropriate at this point to identify more precisely some of the reasons why Italian is or should be studied, particularly in Australia. In the volume *Understanding Italy*, Lo Bianco (1989: 168-176) argues that the case for learning Italian in Australia can be made on five grounds. Some of these have been often used and explained before, e.g. Italian as an 'Australian' language on account of the use made of it by a large and lively Italian-Australian community; Italian as a 'cultural' and 'well connected' language, referring to the existence of other key languages which are its close relatives within the family of Romance languages. One might add here that there is a core of terminology in science, technology, medicine, pharmacy, and the law, but also music and figurative arts, which constantly recycles classical Latin (and Greek) roots and expressions in many languages of the world. Italian is of course a prime carrier of that process.

The next reason would have Italian as the 'easiest' language, or the most 'learnable' by native speakers of English on account of the lesser linguistic 'distance' from it compared with other languages such as Spanish, French, German and Russian (in that order). This is easier to accept, however, when the comparison is made with languages intuitively felt as more 'distant' from English such as Arabic, Chinese and Japanese. These languages are deemed to require some 1,950 hours of instruction to attain a median level of proficiency, according to the United States' Foreign Service Institute. Italian, Spanish and French are deemed to require less than 40% of that number of hours, i.e. some 720 hours. These remarks about any language being easy to learn will need to be taken, nevertheless, with the proverbial pinch of salt, and would not stand up to scrutiny if they were to be applied to more advanced study and use of the language.

As Lo Bianco points out, however, the ease of learning Italian in Australia is also related to its being an 'Australian' language and thus providing naturalistic contexts for use and exposure within reach of the learner. The last, but by no means least, reason cited is currently the favourite in the eyes of policy makers, many of whom would maintain that the languages to be taught in Australia should be those that can be used 'to persuade customers to buy; to gain "intelligence" on markets; to access and promote goods in largely uncharted waters'.

One could add here the one phrase 'tourism and hospitality industry', denoting one of the fastest growing areas of the Australian GDP. This kind of argument is very uncommonly used for supporting the teaching of Italian, but it is a perfectly reasonable proposition once the facts are established.

The rest of the chapter will therefore endeavour to establish a concrete dimension for the claim of Italian as a useful language for trade and business in Australia because:

- Australia needs to improve its trade position and its prospective relationship with the European Community;
- Australia can improve (diversity) and increase its volume of trade with Italy and make better use of Italian technology and expertise in certain areas (e.g. wool technology, tourism and hospitality, industrial design, robots);
- There are many Italian firms and Italian-based multinational firms operating in Australia in many fields. Their language requirements need to be looked at;
- There are Australian and Italo-Australian businesses who have import/export dealings with Italy. The language of transactions is not always English;
- At the micro-economic local level there are firms, shops and professionals whose clientele is Italian-speaking. The language of transaction is often Italian.

8.4 Italy's Economy and the European Context

The image of Italy as a predominantly agricultural and poor country was commonly held, and was in many ways true, at least up to the 1950s. This image was carried and confirmed abroad by the successive waves of mainly peasant migrants who left the country in search of better economic opportunities. Another inescapable facet of this truth was and still is the fact that Italy is poor in primary resources, particularly energy sources and minerals for industrial development. Italy had to, and still must, buy them on the world market.

This image, however, was partly a stereotype. Almost from the beginning of its nationhood in 1861 Italy had the range of technologies and products that characterised the most advanced industrial powers. For example, even 'before World War I Italy was one of the few countries which could produce steamships, battleships, locomotives, automobiles and planes' (Ermini and Halevi 1989:15). This did not, of course, make Italian underdevelopment any less real. At the beginning of the 1950s Italy's gross national product and level of consumption per

capita were below 45% of the values obtaining in the United Kingdom for the same indicators.

Yet by the period of the Italian economic boom between 1958 and 1962, the proportion of workers employed in manufacturing and other secondary industry overtook the numbers of those employed in agriculture. This development could only occur with a massive internal exodus from south to north and from country areas to industrial areas and large urban conglomerates (Ascolani 1991:25-27). Masses of workers had already left the country since the end of World War II, but the movement became more and more Europe-oriented. Belgium, France, the UK and increasingly Germany and Switzerland were becoming the chosen destinations of Italian workers, either as settlers or as *Gastarbeiter*. At the same time Italy was contributing to bringing about the integration of European economies towards a common market and a common political body, the European Community. This process, coupled with the internal changes, underpinned a rapid transformation of the Italian economy (cf. Ermini and Halevi 1989:16-17), whose exports were now led by products of the mechanical, electronic, metallurgic and chemical sectors, while the southern regions moved towards higher levels of consumption and industrialisation. The mid-1970s saw the textile and footwear, tile and generally small and medium-size firms again take a leading role against the background of the energy crisis of the period, but this time those traditional, artisan-based sectors were operating on highly sophisticated technological developments.

As the *Economist* commented in 1988 (quoted in Lo Bianco op. cit.: 174), Italy had achieved in the decade 'the fastest rate of growth of the big four European economies', thus becoming the fourth or fifth largest capitalist economy, and the third, after Germany and France, in the European Community, which has played and will continue to play a central role in Italy's development.

The total volume of Italy's foreign trade was equivalent to about $420 billion in 1990 (De Agostini 1991). While more than half of Italy's trade occurs within the European Community, as happens with most member countries of the Community, Italy has a lively pattern of trade outside the EC, including Switzerland, Austria, Russia and other Eastern European countries, and with Japan and China and of course the USA with whom it ran a surplus of about $5 billion in 1990. It imports primary resources from Eastern Europe, the Middle East, Africa and of course Australia and exports a very wide basket of value added commodities ranging from industrial machinery to finished consumer goods.

Despite some political hiccoughs, 1992 marked for the European Community another important movement towards greater integration of the European economies, which together make the strongest market in the world. The disintegration of the former Soviet bloc, while posing enormous problems of an economic and political nature to its Western neighbours, also offers them just as great opportunities for economic expansion and co-operation. Notwithstanding the current recessionary situation of the world's economy, compared with the USA and Japanese economic zones the European Community zone is probably the healthiest. This can be attributed (cf. Ermini and Halevi 1989:9-24), among other things, to the fact that most of the European Community member nations' trade occurs within the zone, and their economy is 'no longer complementary to the US economy ... [it] has surplus in agricultural products, and an almost self-sufficient manufacturing base' (ibid.) while its deficiencies in energy and raw

materials are made up by its now strengthened links with Eastern Europe, and also Middle Eastern and North African countries. All these countries import from the European Community capital goods and services; this prevents the growth of unduly large trade imbalances.

While it is not easy to predict the shape Eastern Europe will eventually assume, there is little doubt that the EC will continue to play a major economic role in its development. Italy has an already well established and positive industrial and technological relationship with these countries. For example, Fiat, which has become the world's leading tractor and agricultural machinery producer (*Illustrato* June 1992:4-5) with the acquisition of Ford-New Holland, has already a relevant manufacturing base in Eastern European countries such as Poland and Russia as well as a long established presence in Australia.

At the same time the economic war of attrition between Japan and the USA appears to worsen in proportion to the trade imbalance between the two countries. Australia seems to be caught uncomfortably in the middle with its debt and strong connections with the US on the one hand, and its new regional commitment to the Asian (mainly Japanese) economic zone, and a considerable surplus with Japan itself. In addition the US is by far the strongest competitor *vis-a-vis* Australia as a supplier of raw materials and agricultural products to world markets, particularly Japan. It would therefore be dangerous for Australia to fall into the 'raw materials trap'. Ermini and Halevi's (ibid.) suggestion for avoiding this trap is to 'diversify export markets and export goods through economic restructuring'. This requires in turn 'a culture of true multiculturalism' which these authors believe is absent from the Australian business class and its political class.

Australia as a medium economic power would find it difficult to take on economic giants such as the US or Japan or the European Community as a bloc on the world market, or at the GATT negotiating table. It will not be able in any case to continue relying purely on raw materials exports to deal with its trade imbalance with the European Community which, as Table 8.1 shows, is around the $4 billion mark.

	1987/88	1988/89	1989/90	Variation 1990-87	Variation %
Imports to Australia	9,746.7	10,764.2	11,318	1,571.3	16.1%
Exports to EC	6,407.7	6,007.5	6,848.3	440.6	6.9%
Balance	3,339	4,756.7	4,469.7	1,130.7	33.9%
Total Australia-EC trade	16,154.4	16,771.7	18,166.3	2,011.9	12.5%

Table 8.1
Trade between Australia and European Community ($million)
Source: ABS Foreign Trade Australia 1989-90.

Whichever shape the European Community will take on in the medium and long term, Australia will simply not be in a position to disregard or underplay the importance of the relationship. It is more likely that Europe, given its international standing, production and trade in the world, may be more in a position to disregard Australia than vice versa. This would not be in the best interest of Australia nor, in the end, of Europe. Thus it may be foolish for either to underplay the relationship. In the case of Australia this may occur through overstating its newfound regional vocation and appearing too eager to score points in Japan's eyes. In the case of Europe, Australia is not only a market but a point of reference and a strategic connection to the Asian market.

In Italian and European industrial circles a growing presence in Asia is considered as highly desirable and Australia is seen as 'a very important industrial and commercial base ... for the whole South -East Asia Region,' in the words of the chief executive of Iveco, the Italian-based European giant truck company which acquired International Truck Australia in April this year (*Truck Australia* June 1992:4). Iveco's intervention in any case rescues an important manufacturing area with considerable exporting potential for Australia.

Economic achievements notwithstanding, there can be no denying the many and complex problems besetting Italy. These are not only economic but political, institutional as well as social. Without going into detail here these problems can be listed in summary, beginning from a rapidly deteriorating budget, the level of debt which is well above that permitted by the Treaty of Maastricht, and the historical gap between the southern and the more advanced industrialised central and northern regions. The explosive problems posed by traditional (the Mafia) and modern (political and white collar) organised crime, coupled with high unemployment, chronic shortages in infrastructure and services, pollution and deterioration of historical and environmental heritage place the future of the country in a critical position.

None of the main problems is really new. Chronic deficit has been a feature of the organisation of the economy. *The Economist Book of World Statistics* (1990:132) cites Italy as an example of a country that runs substantial deficits, but manages to keep some check on inflation while stimulating investment: 'post-war Italian governments have regularly run huge deficits, financed largely from domestic resources, while enjoying one of the fastest growth rates in Europe, inflation only slightly above the European average, and high levels of business investment ... all this is due in part to a very high level of savings by individuals'. But as R. Graham (1992:3) in the *Financial Times* points out, by July 1992 debt had become 'equivalent to 103% of GDP, more than 40 points above the maximum permitted by Maastricht'.

The proportional representation system continues to promote instability with fifty-one governments (typically coalition) since the World War II. Currently the parliament has representation from no fewer than sixteen parties, this time with only one of them above 20% of the vote, and twelve of them with less than 6%. From this Graham (ibid.) aptly concludes, 'Ordinary Italians are simply fed up having to cope with a malfunctioning state'.

The resourcefulness, capacity for strenuous work, and the imagination of the Italian people are once again called upon, as in the post World War II period, to bootstrap a new era of development. Current political events, such as the positive outcome of the April 1993 referenda on institutional change, seem to point in that direction.

Regardless of the political and institutional shape with which Italy will emerge from the current crisis, Australia's relationship with it is beyond question for the foreseeable future, on the strength both of the human and commercial bonds between the two countries.

8.5 Pattern of Australian Trade with Italy

The European Community together with USA and Japan are the first three trading partners of Australia, accounting for about 60% of Australia's volume of trade. But while Australia runs a surplus with Japan (just over $3 billion in 1989-90) as it does with Korea and the ASEAN countries, it has a regular deficit with the European Community (e.g. well over $4 billion in 1989-90). Part of this deficit is with Italy, as can be appreciated from Table 8.2 which reports the pattern of trade between Australia and Italy for the years 1986-92. This has been characterised by a steadily growing volume of exchange (in absolute terms). Italy buys between 2.1% and 2.7% of total Australian exports (12th position) and provides between 2.9% and 3.3% of Australia's imports (7th position) up to 1990. This means Italy is among the first ten commercial partners of Australia.

	1986/87	1987/88	1988/89	1989/90	1990/91	1991/92
Imports to Australia	1,110.3	1,329.8	1,373.7	1,635.0	1,390.0	1,228.2
Exports to Italy	823.2	1,093.0	1,019.3	1,043.9	1,025.0	977.3
Balance	287.1	236.8	354.4	591.1	365.0	251.6
Total Australia-Italy trade	1,933.5	2,422.8	2,393.0	2,678.9	2,415.0	2,206.2

Table 8.2
Trade between Italy and Australia ($million)
Source: ABS Foreign Trade Australia
(1990-92 figures supplied by A. Willis, NLLIA.)

In 1990 there was a significant increase of nearly 20% of Italian exports to Australia as against the preceding year, which increased the balance of trade by 67% in Italy's favour. Australian exports to Italy, on the other hand, have remained below the 1987-88 peak of $A1,329.8 million.

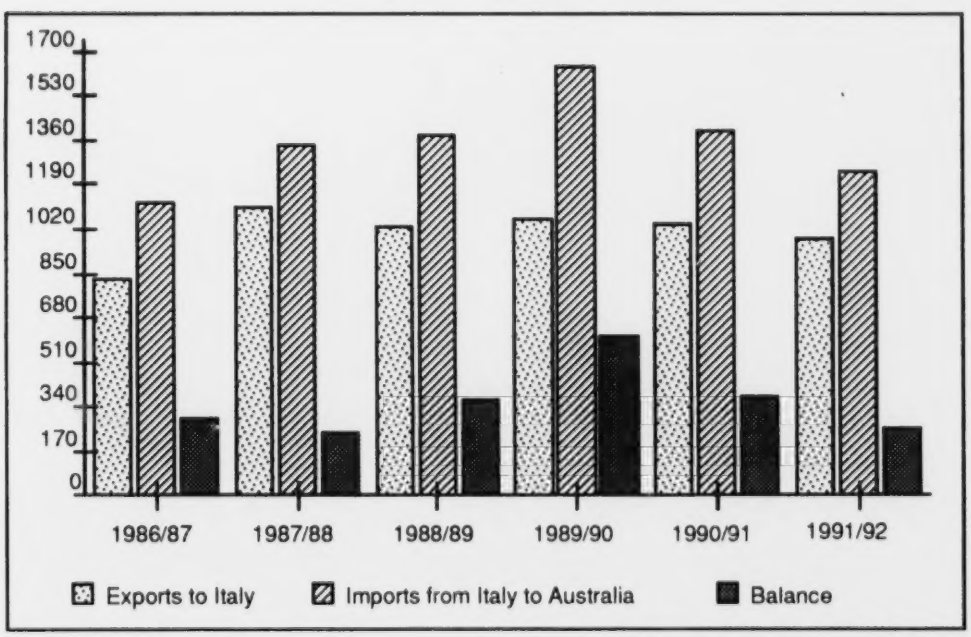

Figure 8.1
Trade between Australia and Italy 1986-1992

For the last two years, Figure 8.1 shows a slowing down of the total volume of trade due to the greater attention paid by Australia to the South East Asian market.

Australian exports to Italy remain traditionally within a narrow range of goods with little or no value added, such as wool, minerals, coal and hides. These four categories are the bulk (about 88%) of Australian exports to Italy but are slowly decreasing. It must be noted however that some (at present marginal) export areas of manufactured and high technological content products, such as telecommunications and sound recording equipment, transport equipment, photographic and optical goods and professional, scientific and controlling instruments and apparatus, however small in relation to the primary exports to Italy, are all steadily increasing. This probably indicates an area of development for Australian exports that should be more decidedly pursued because these, as other highly value added products, not only generate jobs but stimulate development and research.

The latter point could be considered in relation to certain characteristics of the broad spectrum of finished products Italy exports to Australia (Italy has no primary resources to speak of). Most of these products are consumable and durable goods which rely heavily on quality features (e.g. design, special materials) and/or high technological content for their sale. The major category is made up of industrial machinery, equipment and machine parts with a value of $A410 million followed by non-metallic mineral manufactures at just over $A204 million.

All other exports, such as office machines, electrical machines and appliances, professional and scientific equipment, vehicles, textiles, clothing and clothing accessories, shoes, food, paper and furniture, do not reach the $A100 million mark.

The Italian pattern of trade with Australia, then, relies not so much on the export of large quantities of any one product, but rather on a highly differentiated and very broad range of products. Australia on the other hand relies on a much narrower band of products, mostly (but decreasingly) primary products. Although on a small scale, this pattern confirms the fact that Australia cannot continue to rely on its primary products. Indeed 'Japan and the Far Eastern zone have a political interest in substituting Australian products with American products (and) Europe too has a vested interest in looking at the Soviet Union as the main supplier of similar products' (Ermini and Halevi 1989: 23-24). This interest is now if anything even greater with the breakdown of Soviet power opening an even wider window of opportunity for the European Community in the Eastern European markets.

In the search for alternative markets and products Australia could take advantage of its human, cultural and linguistic resources as represented, among others, by a strong Italo-Australian community. This could assist in forging the necessary links with Italy and thereby Europe, and creating collaborative agreements and joint ventures to strengthen Australia's manufacturing basis into a more diversified and technologically advanced one.

8.6 Italian and Italo-Australian Business

There is a considerable presence of Italian firms operating in Australia and an even greater network of local Australian and Italo-Australian firms trading with Italy. This is exemplified by the number of Italian Chambers of Commerce and Industry in Australia (Table 8.3). This network cannot be serviced only in English. Italian business people coming to Australia prefer to conduct negotiations in Italian (whether they are selling or buying) and expect to find, as in any other industrialised country in the world, the appropriate level of linguistic services available.

NSW	338
South Australia	235
Victoria	410
Queensland	137
Western Australia	109
Tasmania	2
Italy	51
TOTAL	1,282

Table 8.3
Italian Chambers of Commerce and Industry in Australia: Members by State

Italy plays a role in the Australian economy, then, not only with its immigrants but with its industry and technology - Italy is one of the world leaders not only in robotics, burotics (office automation), design, fashion and shoes, but also because some Australian businesses have chosen Italian technology. The National Australia Bank and the NSW State Bank for instance have chosen Olivetti for their data processing and office automation. Olivetti has been in Australia as a direct subsidiary of the Italian company since 1952, and has supplied many large projects, including cabling and project management for the new International Airport, Sydney; the networking system for the automation of motorisation offices for the Roads and Traffic Authority (NSW); and large projects for Qantas, the Water Board (NSW), the TAB (Victoria), and Norwich Insurance (Salvatore Rodolfo, personal communication).

The director of ICE (Italian Government Trade Commission), P. Tosarelli (1991), lists forty-two Italian companies trading in NSW alone. They include banking, finance and insurance, manufacturing, transport, telecommunications, construction, electronic and computer equipment, agricultural and industrial machinery companies, and so on. Some of them, such as Fiatagri, have been present in the Australian agricultural machinery market for as long as seventy years. This company, having recently acquired Ford New Holland, has become one of the top three agricultural machinery companies in the world. Another Italian firms, Ferrero, one of the most innovative companies in the world according to *Fortune Magazine*, has set up a manufacturing plant in Australia. It has between sixty and eighty employees and its own fifty strong Australian marketing team which is responsible for marketing its products to the whole of South East Asia, New Zealand and Japan as well as Australia. The 'Ferrero model', i.e. establishing in Australia a manufacturing base not only to cater for the local market but, importantly, to have a launching pad for the large and fast growing Asian market, has not been followed by many other Italian companies. This means that there is room for improvement since, clearly, 'Italian companies have not yet fully recognised the opportunities for investment in Australia' (Darlington 1991). By the same token it must also mean that Australia has been

tardy, if not uninterested, in attracting or wooing Italian investment. For instance, Italy is one of the major buyers of Australian wool. The problem-ridden Australian wool industry has failed to attract Italian textile technology, which is a world leader, to add value to the accumulated stockpile of raw wool.

Members of the Italo-Australian second generation are the most likely to pursue and establish the necessary connections: they are in a favourable position to develop the particular skills and crafts in which Italy traditionally excels. Jewellery, for instance, earned Italy $4 billion in exports in 1990. Sydney-based Nicholas Cerrone, following in the tradition of excellence of Italian goldsmiths, is exporting Australian-made jewellery for sale in seventeen major department stores in Japan, according to *The Italian Touch* magazine (Italian Chamber of Commerce and Industry 1991). It also reports another interesting case, the JAS Australia company which in 1990 won the Italian Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Australia's top award. When it started operations in 1978, it was one of the first freight-forwarders in Australia. Its 1990 turnover of $15 million was generated mainly in freight to and from Italy. One of the strong selling-points of the company, run by young Italo-Australians, is its multi-lingual staff which 'have given the company a considerable advantage in assisting clients with foreign trade regulation and customs formalities. This has enabled them to build a solid client base which includes Alfa Romeo, Fiatauto, Ferrero, Gucci, Olivetti and Trussardi'.

Hence, since language is unquestionably the most important medium for learning specific skills and for developing cultural and trade connections between countries, second generation Italians require a strong linguistic competence in Italian to succeed in forging these links to the advantage of both Australia and Italy.

Ethnic business, which can count on family and personal contacts abroad, is able to operate multinationally and does so increasingly, as a recent survey by OMA indicates. The study found among such ethnic networks 'high levels of success and innovation ... [and] characteristics resembling those of the most recent developments in advanced capitalism' (*Ethnic Spotlight* July 1992). A high level of inter- and intra-community trading of goods and services also takes place within minority groups and much of this business avails itself of the community language for its successful conduct (Collins 1992:73-84).

8.7 Italian Tourism to Australia

Tourism is among the fastest growing industries in Australia, if not the fastest (Table 8.4). Nearly 2.4 million international visitors came to Australia in 1991, a record year, with forecasts estimating nearly double this number, 4.85 million people, by the year 2000 (BTR, Australian Tourism Forecasts, 1990), . This fact is significant in terms of planning, among other things, language services provided by tourist guides, professional interpreters, hospitality industry personnel and so on, of an acceptable professional standard.

Language education requires a long lead time and it would not be well served by short term considerations. Concentration on a narrow band of languages at all levels of education on account of what appears to be the most pressing LOTE

demand should be avoided. The shortage of Japanese tour guides, for instance, crops up fairly regularly in the media as in an article by Fiona Kennedy (*The Australian* 4 August 1992:3) which reports, correctly, a projected 1,800 to 2,000 Japanese tour guide vacancies by 1995.

	1985	1990	1991	1991 %
Europe	300,900	548,400	530,800	23%
USA and Canada	237,400	304,400	325,200	13%
Japan	107,600	479,900	528,500	22%
Asia (excl Japan)	163,400	348,100	373,800	16%
New Zealand	245,300	418,400	480,600	20%
Other	88,000	115,700	131,500	6%
Total	1,142,600	2,214,900	2,370,400	100%

Table 8.4
Short term arrivals of Overseas Visitors to Australia 1985-1991
Source: ABS 1992 Cat No. 3401.0

However, in the absence of much information about other languages needed, the impression may be created in the long run that Japanese tourism will grow indefinitely or that other sources of tourists are less important, not just at present but also in the future. Of course in an economy such as Australia, which will rely more and more on tourism as a source of income, it would be unwise to disregard alternative source countries or indeed any of the sources of tourists, even the smallest ones. In this connection the appropriate competencies in the community languages should be developed and maintained. Indeed, the realisation that 'migrants hold the key to valuable export markets for Australia' (*The Australian* 19 August 1992:20) is just beginning to emerge.

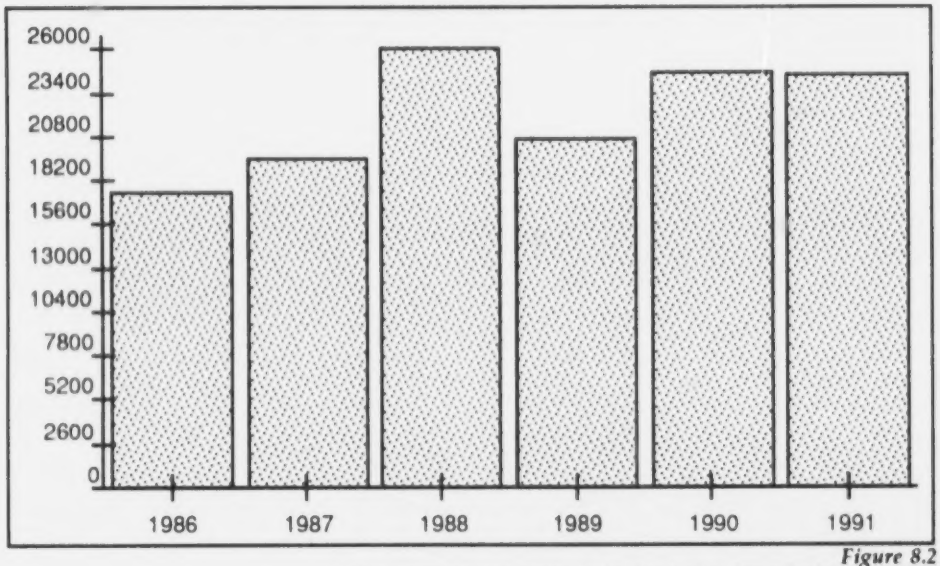

Figure 8.2
Short term visitor arrivals in Australia from Italy 1986-1991
Source: Bureau of Tourism Research International Visitors Survey 1991.

Australia is becoming an increasingly popular destination for Italian tourists. This interest is bound to remain strong because of the firm links and contacts (family, friends, business, etc.) between Italians and Italo-Australians. Tourism from Italy (Figure 8.2) has increased steadily in the 1980s and now stands at nearly 25,000 visitors per year, the third source country from continental Europe

after Germany and Switzerland. Italian tourists tend to concentrate seasonally in August (European summer) and December. In those periods one tourist agency in Sydney, for instance, needs more than the eight Italian-speaking guides it usually employs. Similar shortages occur with an agent who organises the appropriate Australian contacts for visiting Italian business people (personal communication).

Europe taken as a whole is the largest supplier of tourists to Australia and, even though Japan may soon reach that position, it will remain a strong and significant traditional source of tourists on account of the strong economic, cultural and human links between the two continents. This tends to be corroborated by particular characteristics of the European tourist.

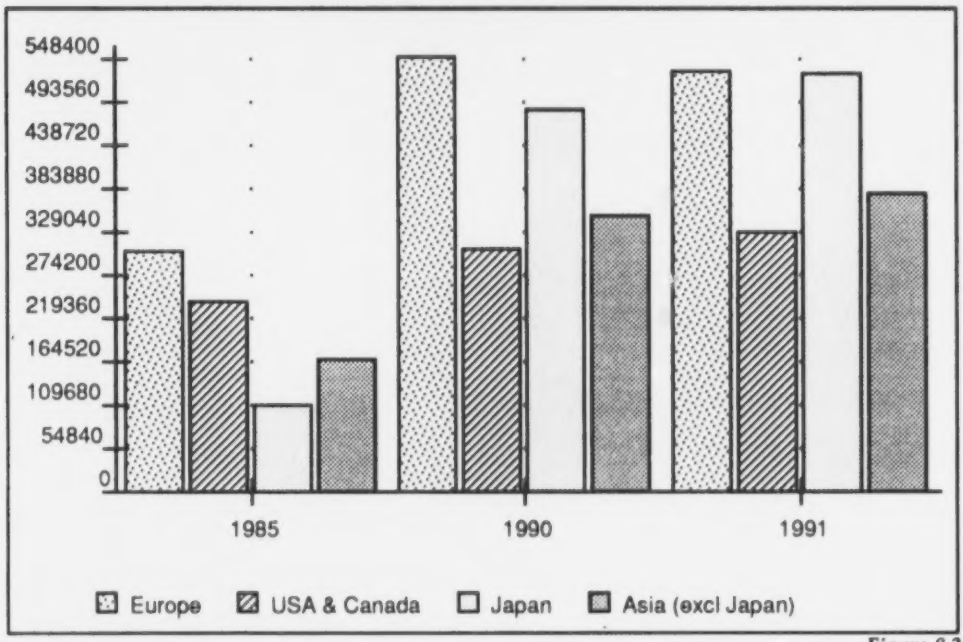

Figure 8.3
Short term arrivals of overseas visitors
Source: ABS 1992 Cat No. 3401.0

While tourism from Asian countries is growing at a faster rate than either North American or European tourism, it must be observed also that until the mid-1980s the Asian total was very small, and also that the European total up to 1991 was still larger than that of Japan, and stable, as Figure 8.3 shows.

8.7.1 Length of Stay and Expenditure of Tourists in Australia in 1991

It is interesting to note that as a group European tourists tend to have a greater impact in that they stay longer and spend more on average than any of the other groupings. In 1991 UK and Irish visitors stayed 59 nights and spent $2,431 each while continental European visitors managed to spend even more ($2,529) in a shorter average visit (47 nights). All of the European tourists together spent a total of 26.8 million nights in Australia and spent over $1.3 billion. By way of

comparison, the North American group with an average of 29 nights and $1,945 expenditure, and the Japanese tourists with eight nights and average $1,329 expenditure, taken together spent about as much as European tourists.

	UK and Ireland	Other Europe	USA and Canada	Japan	Other Asia
No. of visitors	273,400	257,400	325,200	528,500	373,800
Average expenditure ($) in Australia	$2,431	$2,529	$1,945	$1,329	$2,169
Average Expenditure ($) per day	$41	$54	$67	$166	$59
Average number of nights in Australia	59	47	29	8	37
Total no. of nights in Australia (millions)	15.3	11.5	9	4.3	12.8
Total expenditure ($million)	$664.64	$650.96	$632.51	$702.38	$810.77

Table 8.5

Source: Bureau of Tourism Research 1992 Australian Tourism Data Card

It would evidently not be wise to disregard the human factor in the trade equation. The overseas born Australian population at the 1986 census approached 3.5 million people. Out of these more than 2.2 million people, i.e. over 14% of the total population, were born in Europe and over 10% of these were born in Italy. Almost nine million people at the same census explicitly reported European ancestry (Castles 1991:17). It is fair to say that the majority of the Australian population identifies with Europe. This means that they will continue to stimulate trade with Europe as much as they will cherish European values. Hence it is in Australia's interest to increase the range and volume of products it sells to Europe. Among the conditions for the realisation of this are the development of language resources at high and even specialised levels of competence.

The European Community has been moving fairly fast to cater for its language needs. It has set up objectives and programs of co-operation and exchanges of student and workers involving universities and industry in all the European Community countries extending in some cases to the new realities of eastern Europe such as Hungary and Poland. These exchange programs, namely Erasmus, Tempus, Comett and Lingua, directly or indirectly promote and support the quantitative and qualitative expansion of learning and teaching of languages. These programs, as Staddon (1992:45) aptly points out, 'are in direct contradiction to the Anglocentric or French-dominated view of the working languages of the European Community, and lend weight to the argument that trade by and within the European Community is and will continue to be conducted in a range of languages'.

Despite the obvious high level of trade and commercial activities in the Italian and Italo-Australian business world and a significant Italian presence in tourism, the Italian language was not among the nine or ten languages deemed to have trade or commercial priority, listed in the Ingram et al. report (op. cit.) and the Valverde (op. cit.) report. A proper investigation of the need for Italian in the commercial areas, including tourism and other business needs for the language, should be carried out as a matter of urgency in order to give direction to Italian language teaching institutions.

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APPENDIX A GLOSSARY

Any kind of research and particularly research into Languages in Australia has its own terms and acronyms. In an effort to minimise confusion, the following terms are briefly explained.

AACLAME	Australian Advisory Council on Languages and Multicultural Education, Department of Employment, Education and Training.
AFMLTA	Australian Federation of Modern Language Teachers Association.
After-hours School (classes)	See Ethnic Schools
AIMA	Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs.
ALL Guidelines	Australian Language Levels. A curriculum framework for languages funded by AACLAME.
ALLP	Australian Language and Literacy Policy
ASLPR	Australian Second Language Proficiency Ratings.
Australian/s	Born or living in Australia.
Australitalian	Dual identity with more emphasis on Australian.
BIR	Bureau of Immigration Research.
CIAC	*Comitato Italiano Assistenza*, Canberra.
CIAS	*Comitato Italiano di Assistenza Scolastica*, Darwin.
CIC	Co-ordinating Italian Committee, Adelaide.
CIS	Publisher and private language school, Melbourne.
CL	Community langauge(s).
CLB	Community Language Background. In this publication it is preferred to LBOTE (see) as it describes positively a students' language background.
CLCI	*Centro di Lingua e di Cultura Italiana*, Perth, WA.
CLE	Community Languages Element of the School Language Program. Formerly known as the Ethnic Schools Program.
COASIT	*Comitato Assistenza Italiano*. A community organisation with both welfare and education/cultural functions. COASIT is the largest provider of Insertion classes and it also runs its own after-hour classes of Italian. While organised at a local level this committee exists in various cities (Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane) and receives funds from Italian, Federal and sometimes State Governments.
Community Languages	A language used by a minority ethnic group resident in Australia. The term Language Other Than English (LOTE) is often employed instead of CL, as it is more inclusive. However Community Language will be a more useful and positive descriptor particularly for a language spoken at the local level and/or within the school community. The fact that a language is spoken by a given local community is not in contrast nor in contradiction with the fact that it may be an international language (e.g. Spanish, French) or a useful commercial language or indeed a 'modern' language studied in school and university for its particular cultural/historical significance (e.g. Italian, German or the previously mentioned ones).
Community-based (school) Committee / *Comitato Scolastico*	A body set up by a local community or association specifically to carry out Italian teaching and learning activities, the main objective being language maintenance and development amongst the second generation. There are about fifty such committees spread all over Australia, the three COASIT being the largest. Some committees obtain funding for their teaching activities from the Italian Government and sometimes also from the Australian Government as well as generating their own funds. There are some committees (local and somewhat isolated) which are not funded by any government, and raise funds through their own activities.
Dante Alighieri Society	An international Italian cultural organisation, similar to the Alliance Française or the Goethe Institute. Dante Alighieri organises Italian language and culture courses for adults. In some instances it conducts tuition for senior secondary students preparing for a high school certificate examination. There are seven Dante committees in Australian, one in each capital city, as well as Mt Isa.

Day-School	The term is commonly used to refer to all primary and secondary mainstream schooling whether organised by State governments, Catholic Education Office or any other independent education authority accredited by the State government. The term is used interchangeably with 'mainstream' school in contrast with 'after-hours' or 'Ethnic' school.
DEET	[Federal] Department of Employment, Education and Training.
Direttore Didattico/Didatic Director	Education officer attached to the Italian Diplomatic offices (Consulates and the Embassy) with a specific brief to advise on and, to some extent, supervise Italian teaching activities funded by the Italian Government. Tasmania and the Northern Territory do not have their own *Direttore didattico*.
ESL	English as a Second Language.
ESP	Ethnic Schools Program, established by the Commonwealth Government in 1981. Now known as the Community Languages Element (CLE) of the School Language Program.
Ethnic School	Language and culture classes run by ethnic communities outside day school hours. The main purpose is language maintenance and development of formal skills (reading and writing) in the language of the ethnic group. In the case of Italian funding for ethnic school classes (also called 'after-hours classes' in this report) is derived from the Italian Government through its Consular offices and the Embassy as well as the Federal Ethnic Schools Program of DEET. In a very minor way and only in a few cases the State Government may give some contribution as well.
FILEF	*Federazione Italiana Lavoratori Emigrati e Famiglie*. Italian Federation of Migrant Workers and their Families, an Italian/international migrant welfare organisation with an active interest in social and educational issues. It publishes a bilingual monthly (*Nuovo Paese/New Country*). There are FILEF organisations in Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney.
Foreign Language	This label is avoided because most languages studied are represented within the Australian community, and 'foreign' may be felt as failing to acknowledge this presence. 'Modern languages', 'community language' or 'LOTE' are the preferred descriptors.
HSC/VCE/TES/TER/PES	Higher School or Education certificate/accreditation that may be obtained at the end of the senior secondary school. (See also Matriculation).
IAWC	Italo-Australian Welfare Centre, Perth, WA.
ICWA	Italian Cultural and Welfare Association, Hobart.
ILOTES	Innovative Languages other than English program
ILTA	Italian language Teachers Association.
In-Service (*Aggiornamento*)	Courses which allow language teachers to up-grade their skills and/or qualifications whilst still teaching (as a normal part of their professional development) or by attending special courses, are organised by Australian education authorities. Some in-service courses specifically for the upgrading of Italian language skills and cultural awareness are either fully or partly supported by the Italian Government. This support includes organisation of courses in Italy, and the awarding of scholarships to individual teachers. The Italian Government also contributes by sending scholars, curriculum and materials experts for in-service activities for teachers in Australia, mainly organised through community-based school committees.
Insertion Classes	Italian classes organised within mainstream day school by community-based committees such as COASIT and CSI. These classes receive funding from the Federal Government. For their Italian teaching activities these committees also receive funds from the Italian Government which are used both for insertion classes and for after-hours (mainly Saturday) classes outside the day school.

ISB	Italian speaking background. Term coined at the Perth meeting for the Italian Profile Project, 12/12/92. (See also NISB).
ISC	Italian School Committee, Sunshine Coast, Bundilla, Queensland.
Italo-Australian Foundation	Community organisation in Victoria with a similar function to COASIT. Now incorporated in COASIT.
Italian/s	Italian born.
Italo-Australian	Dual identity with more emphasis on Italian.
Italophone	Speakers of Italian. The term covers all those who use the Italian language in Australia, among whom there are people born in Italy, Egypt, Malta, Yugoslavia, South America as well as Australia. Italian-born is used in this profile in the same way as ABS (Census) does, i.e. born in Italy.
L1	First language.
L2	Second language.
Language Adviser	Italian language consultant, funded by the Italian Government, and attached to a State education department, but co-operating also with non-government schools. This position was created within the 1989 triennial program (protocol) of the Cultural Agreement between Australia and Italy and came on stream in 1991. At present there is one Adviser in every State except Tasmania.
LOTE	Language/s Other Than English.
Matriculation	An examination usually undertaken in a number of subjects at the end of the secondary school to gain access to university. It is often a cover term for HSC, VCE, TES, SAS, PES, courses, etc., or other certificates/accreditation that may be gained at the end of secondary school with or without examination.(according to the method adopted by each State or Territory). Another term used to indicate the number of students in the last year of secondary school and/or candidates for an end of secondary certificate is 'Year 12'.
ME(C)C	Multicultural Education (Co-ordinating) Committee. State-based committees administering MEP (Multicultural Education Program) funds. Most of them disappeared with the demise of MEP in the mid-1980s.
MEP	Multicultural Education Program begun by the Federal Government under Fraser at the end of the 1970s, following the Galbally Report.
MLTA	Modern Language Teachers Association (State-based). (See AFMLTA).
NAFLaSSL	National Assessment Framework for Languages at Senior Secondary Level.
NISB	Non-Italian speaking background. Term coined at the Perth meeting for the Italian Profile Project, 12/12/92.
NLLIA	National Languages and Literacy Institute of Australia Limited.
NLLIA/LARC	Language Acquisition Research Centre, at Sydney University and University of Western Sydney. It is part of the network of centres and units located in various universities all over Australia linked to the NLLIA with a central office in Canberra.
NLLIA/LATTICE	Language and Technology Centre, at the University of Queensland. Part of the NLLIA network of centres and units.
Non-Award Courses	Adult education courses offered by universtities but outside a formal degree award. These courses may be of an educational nature or they may be undertaken for professional reasons e.g. an accountant operating in a suburb with a high Italian population may find it necessary to be able to communicate in their language.
NPL	National Policy on Languages.
Patronati	Italian-funded welfare organisations for Italian migrants workers. The welfare arm of trade unioins in Italy, *Patronati* help Italian migrant workers to secure any accrued rights, e.g. pension rights, from working in Italy or other countries of migration.
SAIL	South Australian Institute of Languages, Adelaide, SA.

Saturday School	Usually means ethnic/ after-hours language class. In NSW or Victoria it can also refer to LOTE language classes conducted by the NSW Department of School Education.
Second and Third Generation Italian/s	Australian/s born with at least one Italian-born parent or grandparent.
Second Language	A language acquired after one's native language.
TAFE	Technical and Further Education.
WAATI	Western Australian Association of Teachers of Italian.

APPENDIX B INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANISATIONS

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1. Individuals:

Ms Marilena Abbate, Santa Sabina
Ms Levane Abdoolcader, CEO, Sydney
Dott. Antonio Amato, Italian Consulate, Brisbane
Ms Concetta Andreana, Ministry of Education, Victoria
Ms Danielle Andrews, Macquarie University
Ms Angela Angelone, ICE Italian Trade Bureau
Hon. Franca Arena, Italo-Australian Women Assoc, MLC, NSW
Dott. Francesco Azzarello, Italian Consulate, Adelaide
Ms Barbara Baker, Griffith University
Mr Len Ball, NSW Ethnic Schools Board
Mr Frank Barbaro, FUSIE Federation of Italian Press Abroad
Mr Enzo Belingoi, Dante Alighieri, Brisbane
Ms Norma Bell, DEET
Ms Marina Berton, FILEF, Adelaide
Dr Camilla Bettoni, formerly University of Sydney, now of University of Padova
Sig.ra Nerea Bini, Italian Consulate, Hobart
Ms Antonina Bivona, Victoria University of Technology
Dott. M. Bonazzi, Consolato Generale d' Italia, Melbourne and Hobart
Ms Patricia Burley, RMIT
Dott. Gerlando Butti, Director, Italian Institute of Culture.
Dott. Giovanni Camarda, Italian Consulate, Perth
Ms Margherita Cantafio, University of Western Sydney, Macarthur; NLLIA/LARC
SE dott. Francesco Cardi, Embassy of Italy, Canberra
Dott. Angelo Carriere, Italian Institute for Culture, Sydney
Prof. Giovanni Carsaniga, University of Sydney
Dott. Gianfranco Caserta, Department of Education and the Arts, ACT; Embassy
Mr Tony Cavallero, Commonwealth Employment Office, Petersham, NSW
Mr Luciano Chiappini, Europress Distributors
Ms Jocelyn Clark, ENASCA
Dott. Carlo Coen, Italian Institute for Culture, Melbourne
Ms Mary Colonnelli, COASIT, Sydney
Dott. Ombretta D'Alessandro, Italian Language Adviser, NSW DSE
Mr Mino De Marco, Fiat, Haberfield, NSW
Dott. Fabio De Nardis, Consul General of Italy
Ms Kathy Di Girolamo, Kegworth Primary School, NSW
Ms Jan Dickinson, Dante Alighieri, Brisbane
Mr Peter Dooley, Saturday School of Community Languages, NSW DSE
Ms Sue Dunn, DEET
A/Prof. Anne-Katrin Eckermann, Department of Aboriginal and Multicultural Studies, UNE
Mr Marco Fedi, FILEF/INCA, Australia
Dott.ssa Fiorella Festa, Istituto Italiano di Cultura, Sydney
Ms Concetta Fierravanti, CGIE
Mr Con Fotiadis, Language and Multicultural Centre, SA Department of Education
Ms Tatjana Gandlegruber, Prairiewood High School
Prof. John Gatt-Rutter, La Trobe University
Mr Edward Gavin, NSW DSE
Mr Mike Gretton, Royal Australian Air Force School of Languages
Ms Dina Guest, Ministry of Education, Victoria
Mr Frank Harmer, Prairiewood High School
Dr D.S. Hawley, University of Wollongong
Mr John Hayes, Queensland LOTE Centre
Dr Geoffrey Hull, University of Western Sydney, Macarthur
Mr David Johnson, ACT Board of Studies Secretariat
Ms Monnera Kamis, NSW Board of Studies
Mr Emmanuel Klein, Italian Chamber of Commerce
Ms Glenda Kupczyk-Romanczuk, Department of Aboriginal and Multicultural Studies, UNE
Mr Alan Langdon, Languages and Culture Unit, Qld Ministry of Education
Ms Elisabeth Lascar, University of Western Sydney, Macarthur
Ms Carmen Lavezzari, NSWComites
Sister Judith Lawson, Santa Sabina

Ms Diane Longland, NSW Association of Independent Schools
Ms Alison Mackey, LARC, University of Sydney
Dott. Simonetta Magnani, Italian Language Adviser, Victoria and Tasmania, Ministry of Education, Victoria
Ms Rosanna Maiolo, University of Western Sydney, Macarthur
Mr Marco Mann, NSW Board of Studies Italian Syllabus Committee
Dott. Antonio Mansueto, Italian Consulate, Sydney
Dott. Cesare Marletta, Italian Language Adviser Qld and Northern Territory, Queensland LOTE Centre
Mr Franco Mastroianni, Myrtleford, Victoria
Ms Gabriella Mattacchioni, Sunshine Coast Italian Education Committee
Ms Maria Migliorino, NSW Board of Studies Italian Examination and Syllabus Committee
Dott. Mario Alberto Montecalvo, Consolato Generale d' Italia, Melbourne and Hobart
Prof. Antonio Moreno, Embassy of Italy, Canberra
Ms Pam Moss, WA Ministry of Education LOTE Consultant
Dr Barry Muir, Department of Education, Tasmania
Ms Renata Natoli, Oak Hill College, NSW
Ms Ruth Nicholls, Department of Aboriginal and Multicultural Studies, UNE
Ms Pam Nielsen, Department of Education and the Arts of the ACT
Mr Teodino Ottavi, ICWA, Hobart
Dott. Maria Rosaria Pace, Italian Language Adviser Western Australia, WA Department of Education/Consolato Italiano, Perth
Mr Frank Panucci, NSW Ethnic Affairs Commission
Ms Enrichetta Parolin, NSW DSE
Dr Francesco Pascalis, COASIT, Brisbane
Dott.ssa Adriana Pavone, Italian Language Adviser SA; L and ME Centre, SA DSE
Dott. Domenico Pedata, Embassy of Italy, Canberra
Dr Maria Teresa Piccioli, Catholic University, Sydney
Dott. Vincenzo Pomponio, Italian Consulate, Adelaide
Mr Francesco Raco, FILEF, NSW
Mr Gaetano Rando, University of Wollongong
Dr Helen Reid, Department of Education and the Arts, ACT
Ms Angela Roberto, Bureau of Tourism Research
Mr Salvatore Rodolfo, Olivetti, Australia
Dott. Romano Rubichi, SA Institute of Languages, University of Adelaide
Dott.ssa Antonina Rubino, University of Sydney
Dott.ssa Antonella Salpietro, Canberra
Dr George Saunders, University of Western Sydney, Macarthur
Ms Lina Scalfino, Language and Multicultural Centre, SA Department of Education
Dott. Paolo Scartozzoni, Italian Consulate, Brisbane
Dott. Vincenzo Schioppa, Italian Consulate, Perth
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Dott. Franco Vicenzotti, Italian Institute for Culture, Sydney
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Ms Patricia Ward, NSW Ethnic Schools Board
Ms Karen White, Human Resources, NSW DSE
Mr Peter White, NLLIA LATTICE, University of Queensland
Ms Annette Willis, NLLIA, Melbourne
Ms Jane Wilton, Department of Social Science, UNE
Ms Margaret Zanghi, Catholic Education Office, Sydney
Ms Jane Zemiro, University of Sydney

2. Community-based Italian school committees registered with the education office of the respective Italian consulate; and other associations contacted:

COASIT (Comitato Assistenza Italiano): Brisbane; Melbourne; Sydney
Comitato Italiano Assistenza, Canberra (CIAC)
Dante Alighieri Societies: Adelaide; Brisbane; Canberra; Darwin; Hobart; Melbourne; Mount Isa; Perth; Sydney
East Murden Italian School, C/O East Murden Primary School
FILEF: NSW; South Australia; Victoria
Italian Australian Society of Port Augusta, South Australia
Italian Centre of Language and Culture, Subiaco, Western Australia
Italian Committee for Scholastic Assistance (CIAS), Darwin

Italian Community Centre of Far North Queensland
Italian Cultural and Welfare Association, Tasmania
Italian Didactic Centre, South Australia
Italian School Committee, Bundilla, Queensland
Italian Social Welfare, NSW
Italo-Australian Education Foundation, Melbourne, Victoria
Italo-Australian Welfare Centre, Western Australia
Millicent Italian Social Club Inc., South Australia
Mount Gambier Italo-Australian Club Inc., South Australia
Port Pirie Italian Community Inc., South Australia
St Francis Italian Centre, South Australia
St Joseph Pignatelli School, Perth

3. Schedule of interviews and meetings (H. & G. Andreoni):

QUEENSLAND 20 May 1991
Jan Dickinson, Dante Alighieri, Brisbane,
Enzo Belingoi

NEW SOUTH WALES 19 - 20 June 1991
Silvio Canova and wife, Coffs Harbour, 19.6.91
Haridian Ramirez et.al., Multicultural Access and Resource Services, representing 26 groups, Coffs Harbour, 19.6.91
Nelly Spagnolo, Coffs Harbour, 20.6.91
Margaret Standing, Coffs Harbour, 20.6.91
Giovanni Spagnolo, Coffs Harbour, 20.6.91

QUEENSLAND 27-30 August1991
Attilio Troian, Brisbane, 28.8.91
Dorina Ruffini, Brisbane, 28.8.91
Romano Crisci, Brisbane, 28.8.91
Luigia Brondello, Brisbane, 28.8.91
Angela Ferraro, Brisbane, 28.8.91
Maria Cuoco and Sig. Rosario, Brisbane, 28.8.91
Mario La Rosa and Josepina Barletta, Brisbane, 28.8.91
Salvatore Massimino, Brisbane, 28.8.91
Carmine Di Virgilio, Brisbane, 29.8.91

VICTORIA 3-6 September 1991
A. Campagna, Wangaratta, 3.9.91
Sig. Troia, Wangaratta, 3.9.91
Emilio Fiorenza, Shepparton, 4.9.91
Renzo Piroli, Shepparton, 4.9.91
Maria Piroli, Shepparton, 4.9.91
Maria La Spina, Myrtleford, 4.9.91
Mario Niovanni, Myrtleford, 4.9.91
Vincenzo and Giuseppina Vaccaro, Myrtleford, 4.9.91
Cornelio Leita, Myrtleford, 5.9.91

QUEENSLAND 25-26 October 1991
Gabriella Matacchioni
Antonio Amato and Walter Bocchino, Sunshine Coast, 25.10.91
Giovanni and Giovanna Serra, Caboolture, 26.10.91
Salvatore Pinnas and Leonardo Pintus, Caboolture, 27.10.91

NORTHERN TERRITORY 4-6 November 1991
Tarquino Mezzadri, Dante Alighieri, Darwin, 4.11.91
Michele Dilembo, Darwin, 4.11.91
Joseph De Luca, CIAS, Darwin
Harry Stephens, Secondary Correspondence School, Darwin, 5.11.91
Anna Sacillotto, CIAS, Darwin, 5.11.91
Ruza Ruzic, Adelaide River Country Store, 6.11.91
Rino Buzzo, Katherine, 6.11.91

QUEENSLAND 8-17 November1991
G. Vacente, Mt Isa, 8.11.91
Robyn Marlowe (née Pedracini), Georgetown, 10.11.91
Silvio and Carla Mantovani, Innisfail, 10.11.91
Mario and Elvira Merletti, Mareeba, 12.11.91

Gennaro and Teresa Marinelli with Sig. Jacovella, Mareeba, 12.11.91
Maria Meoli, Italian Vice Consul, and Alex Barbiellini, INAS, CISL, Cairns, 13.11.91
Francesco Pascalis, COASIT, and Antonio Amato, Consulate Didactic Director, Brisbane, 16.11.91

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY 23 November 1991
Myriam Bonazzi, CIAS, and Wal Costanzo, Dante Alighieri, 23.11.91

VICTORIA 25 November- 1 December 1991
Antonio and Grazie Bucca, Frankston, 25.11.91
Joseph Lo Bianco, Director NLLIA, Melbourne
G. Martini Piovano and Umberto Martinengo, COASIT, Melbourne, 28.11.91
Tom Hazel, Dante Alighieri; Government House, 28.11.91
Elio Guarnuccio, CIS Director, Melbourne, 29.11.91

SOUTH AUSTRALIA 2-6 December1991
Ausonio and Maria-Concetta Ferraro, Mt Gambier Italo-Australian Club, 2.12.91
Marco Fedi, FILEF, Adelaide
Marinà Berton, Adrian Pavone and Mario Bianco, FILEF, Adelaide, 3.12.91
Giancarlo Chiro, Dante Alighieri, Adelaide, 4.12.91
Antonio Cocchiaro, CIC Director, and Fiorina Colangelo, CIC Education consultant, Adelaide, 4.12.91
Romano Rubichi, South Australia Institute of Language, 4.12.91
Marco Danieli, Adelaide, 4.12.91
Michele Giglio, TAFE, Adelaide and Centro Didattico, Adelaide, 5.12.91
Vito and Rosa Caputo, Port Pirie Italian Community Inc., 5.12.91

WESTERN AUSTRALIA 7-16 December 1991
Paolo Giometti, Albany Italian Club, Albany, 9.12.91
Franco Smargiassi, Albany, 9.12.91
Vicenzo Nani and Vito Pesce, South West Italian Club, Bunbury, 10.12.91
Alessandro Lutero, Centro Di Lingua e Cultura Italiana di Subiaco Perth, 12.12.91
Richard Bosworth, History Dept, Uni. Of Western Australia, Perth, 12.12.91
Meeting at Dante Alighieri, Perth, 12.12.91:
Dr. Francesco Capone, Dante Alighieri;
Rosaria Pace, Italian Language Consultant;
Shirley Babis, Dante Alighieri;
Dr. Emilio Leoni, Lecturer in Italian, Edith Cowan Uni;
Vince Scurria, Perth City Council;
Carmela Briguglio, ESL Consultant, Dept of Education;
Jocelyn Clark, ENASCO;
Carlo Stansky, President, University for 50+;
Concetta D'Orsogna, TAFE Lecturer;
Sarina Sirna, Director, Centro di Assistenza e di Cultura Italo-Australiana;
Dino Gava, Edith Cowan Uni.
Loretta Baldassar, Dept of Anthropology, Uni. of Western Australia, Perth, 14.12.91
T. Crispino, F. Brisca, Benito Giacomucci, Mario Tati, Flavio Birsa, Toni Ruffino, Sig. Ricciardelli, Eastern Goldfields Italian Club, Kalgoorlie, 15.12.91

NEW SOUTH WALES 19 December 1991
Mario Valentino, Owner of Mario's Palace, Broken Hill, 19.12.91

TASMANIA 30-31 January 1992
Nerea Bini and Iacopo Maluta, Italian Vice Consulate, Hobart, 29.1.92
Teodino Ottavi, Nerea Bini, Antonella Taliaco, Erminia Sorella, Sig.ra Gennari, Rosemary Ottavi, ICWA, School Of Italian, Hobart, 30.1.92
G. Ceron, Dante Alighieri, Hobart; 30.1.92

NEW SOUTH WALES 3 January 1992
Meeting at Italian Consulate, 3.2.92:
F. De Nardis, Italian Consul;
Dr F. Festa, Director, Italian Cultural Institute;
Franceselini, President, Dante Alighieri;
Dr M. Piccioli, Catholic University;
O. D'alessandro, Italian Language Consultant;
M. Alimeni, Secretary, COASIT;
A. Mansueto, Direttore Didattico, Italian Consulate.
Bruno Di Biase, Bruno, FILEF, Sydney, 4.2.92

APPENDIX C ITALIAN COURSES IN AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITIES

The universities listed here offer Italian within their undergraduate and postgraduate awards structures. Where amalgamation has cancelled some of the names under which some institutions were known when offering courses in Italian, the old name is also included.

The main sources and references were:

NLLIA/LATTICE Database (at Jan 1992) - document kindly provided by Peter White;
Some university handbooks available to the researcher at the time of writing;
Dwyer, M and S. Lewis (1992) *Universities in Australia: The Complete Students Guide*. Sydney: The Australian Financial Review;
Lewis, S. (1991) *The Australian Financial Review Universities in Australia - The Complete Students' Guide to Higher Education*. Sydney: The Australian Financial Review.

Telephone calls were made to keep track of some of the changes. This time consuming task could not be pursued in every case. Italian departments interested in updating information for a future publication please contact:

Bruno Di Biase
LARC/UWS Macarthur
PO Box 555
Campbelltown NSW 2560
Telephone: (02) 7729292 Fax: (02) 77221565

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

Australian National University
GPO Box 4 Canberra ACT 0200 (062) 49 5111
Course awards: B Litt, 1 1/2FT, PT Major in BA, 3FT, 4Hons, PT
EFTSU: 13.76

NEW SOUTH WALES

Australian Catholic University, Strathfield Campus
179 Albert Road, Strathfield, NSW 2135 (02) 7392100
Course titles: Beginners Italian; Advanced Italian
Course award: BA Humanities
EFTSU: 39.0

Macquarie University
Balaclava Road, North Ryde, NSW 2109 (02) 805 7314
Admissions: Admissions and Student Records Section, Registrar's Office
Faculty: Modern Languages
Course titles: Introductory Italian I, II; Intermediate Italian; Contemporary Italian Literature
Course award: BA
EFTSU: 15.70

The University of New England, Armidale
Armidale, NSW 2351 (067) 73 3333
Faculty: Arts
Course titles: Italian 100-2, 200-2, 300-2, 400-6; Italian 278-1 and 378-1; Italian in Australia; Italian 310-2 Modern Novel; Italian 350-2 and 360-2 Dante Studies (I), (II); Italian 377-1 Australitalian Narrative
Course awards: BA, PhD, 3-4FT, 3-6PT MA, by thesis or written papers, 1-4FT, PT M Litt, 1FT, 2E G Dip Humanities, by coursework, 1FT, 4PT, E Major in BA, 3FT, 4-5 Hons, PT, EP
EFTSU: 59.41

The University of Sydney
The University of Sydney, NSW 2006 (02) 692 2222
Faculty: Arts
Course titles: Italian IA, IIA (1,2),IAB, IB, IIB (1,2), II (3,4), II (2-4), III (1-4), III(S); Italian IV Honours; Renaissance Literature I; Poetry of the Romantic Period; Manzoni and Verga; Shorter Fiction; The Resistance Novel; Theatre Studies I: Text and Performance; History of the Language; Structure and Function of Written and Spoken Italian; The Language of the Italian Media; Italian Futurism; La Questione della Lingua; Advanced Dante Studies (A), (B); Medieval Drama; Petrarca and Boccaccio; Renaissance Literature IIa, IIb; Ariosto; Satire in the Sixteenth Century; Tasso and Marino; Eighteenth Century Studies; Philology; Women Writers; Twentieth Century Poetry; The Southern Novel; History and the Novel; Twentieth Century Novel; Theatre Studies IIA Italian Comedy; Advanced Theatre Studies; Semiotics; Sociolinguistics; Language Teaching and Language Learning; Culture, Politics And Society In Contemporary Italy: 1968-88; The 1930s; Textual Analysis
Course awards: BA, BA Hons, MA, MA Phil., Major in BA, 3FT, 4Hons, PT
EFTSU: 146.70

University of Western Sydney, Macarthur
PO Box 555, Campbelltown, NSW 2560 (046) 20 3100
Faculty: Education
Course titles: Italian Language and Culture A and B; Italian as a Working Language 1-4; Italian Cultural Studies 1-4; Translation (Italian-English)1-5; Interpreting 1-5; Italian Curriculum (For Secondary Teachers)
Course awards: BA (Community Langs), 3FT BA (Community Langs), Dip ED, 4FT BA (Interpreting and Translation), 3FT, 6PT , B.Ed. (General Primary)
EFTSU: 20.90

University of Wollongong
PO Box 1144, Wollongong, NSW 2500 (042) 21 3927
Faculty: Arts
Course titles: Introductory Italian; Italian Language 1A and 1B; Language for Musicians I; Introduction to Modern Italy; Italian Language 2A and 2B; The Civilisation of the Italian Renaissance; Italian Language 2C, 2D ; Literature and Society in Modern Italy; Dante's Inferno; Italian 111A/B Language, Interpreting and Translating I, II; Italian 111C/D Language; Language and Society; Italian-Australian Studies: Italians in Australia; Dante's *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso;* The Italian Lyric Tradition; The Italian Renaissance; Venice and the Theatre of Carlo Goldoni; Alessandro Manzoni; Drama in Music: Italian Opera; The Novel and Society in 20th Century Italy I and II; Italian IV Honours
Course awards: BA, BA Hons, PhD, 3FT, PT MA (French and/or Italian), 1FT, PT MA (Hons), 1-2FT, PT G Dip Arts (European Studies), 1FT, PT Major in BA, 3FT, PT
EFTSU: 28.74

NORTHERN TERRITORY

Northern Territory University
PO Box 40146, Casuarina, NT 0811 (089) 466565
Faculty: English
Course title: Italian literature and translation
17 enrolments

QUEENSLAND

Griffith University
Kessel Road, Nathan, Qld 4111 (07) 275 7111
Faculty: Humanities
Course titles: Italian I, Using Italian Italian Institutions I: Italy Today; Italian IIA (Communicative) IIB (Written Language); Italian Institutions II: Power and Myth; Italian Institutions III: Italian Discourses; Italian III, Italy through its Language; Italian IV, Advanced Language Skills
Course awards: BA, PhD, 2-5FT, 4-8PT M Phil, 1-3FT, 2-6PT Major in BA (Humanities), 3FT, 4Hons
EFTSU: 22.05

James Cook University of North Queensland
Townsville, Qld 4811 (077) 81 4111
Admissions: The Admissions Officer, Townsville, Qld 4811
Faculty: Arts
Course titles: Italian For Music; Italian III; Morphology and Philology of Italian; Minor Thesis; Dante; Modern Italian Narrative Prose; Italian Lyric Poetry
Course awards: PhD, 2-4FT, PT MA, by research and coursework, 1-3FT, PT Major in BA, 3FT, PT B Ed, 4FT, PT , M. Litt.,BA, BA (Hons).
EFTSU: 14.66

Queensland University of Technology
St Lucia Qld 4067 (07) 365 1111
Admissions: QUT Admissions, Locked Bag No.2, Red Hill, Qld 4059
Faculty: Education, Institute of Modern Languages
Course titles: Elementary and Intermediate Accelerated Italian; Elementary Italian; Intermediate Lower Italian; Intermediate Upper Advanced Italian; Advanced and Higher Italian
Course awards: B. Ed (Discipline Studies Stream), G Dip Italian, 2PTBA/B Bus, combined, 4FT, PT Major in BA, 3FT, PT
EFTSU: 8.49

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Flinders University of South Australia
Sturt Road, Bedford Park, SA 5042 (08) 2012916
Course registration: Admissions office, PO Box 2100, Adelaide, SA 5001
Faculty: Humanities
Course titles: Dissertation In Italian Literature, Philology; 19th Century Italian Narrative: Alessandro Manzoni; Italian Language IIIHF, IVHF; Italian Dialectology I, II; Traditional Popular Culture in Italy; Half-Topic by Dissertation in Italian Literature; Dante IIIHH-VHH; Dante as Literary Critic; Petrarchism in 16th Century Europe; Giacomo Leopardi; Modern Italian Poetry; Italian and Italians in Australia; Twentieth Century Italian Narrative; Italian Language -III;Society and Literature in Italy I-III; Italian IA and IB-IIIB, IS-IIIS, IBS-IIIBS; Society and Literature In Italy IIIS; Topic in Italian I; Italian Language And Italians In Australia; Studies in Italian Language and Linguistics; Third Year Cognate in Italian; Third Year Half Cognate in Italian; Italian for Medical Students; Topic In Italian Language IIB (For Medical Students)
Course awards: BA (Hons), MA by research, 2FT, 2-4PT Major in BA, 3FT, 4Hons, PT BA MB BS.
EFTSU: 62.76

The University of Adelaide
GPO Box 498, Adelaide, SA 5001 (08) 228 5333
Admissions: Admissions Officer, The University of Adelaide
Faculty: Arts
Course titles: Italian Studies Beginners Course A1, A2; Italian Language Studies 1-6 , 3A-4A; Sociolinguistics (Italian); Italian: 20th Century Prose and Poetry; Italian: Verga and Verismo; Italian: Dialectology; Italian: Humanism and Renaissance; Italian: Dante; Directed Study: Italian 1, 2; Professional Project (Italian); Interpreting and Translating 3 -5 (Italian); Field Experience I, 2; Applied Translation (Italian)
Course awards: BA (Interpreting and Translating), B.Ed.,B.Ed.Major in BA, 3FT, 4 Hons, PT
EFSTU: See Flinders

University of South Australia (City Campus)
North Terrace, Adelaide, SA 5000 (08) 236 2211
Faculty: Arts and Humanities
Course titles: Italian Beginners' 1, 2; Basic Italian 1, 2; Italian Refresher; Italian 1A, 1B, 2A, 2B, 3A, 3B, 3C
Course awards: BA PhD, 3-4FT, 3-6PT MA, by thesis or written papers, 1-4FT, PT M Litt, 1FT, 2E, BA
EFSTU: 6.00

TASMANIA

University of Tasmania
GPO Box 252C, Hobart, Tas 7001 (002) 20 2101
Admissions: Admissions Officer, University of Tasmania
Faculty: Arts
Course titles: Italian 1; Introductory Italian A; Introductory Italian B; Italian Language and Advanced Language; Italian Literature; Italian Civilisation; Italian Poetry; Italian Linguistics; Italian Novels; Professional Interpreting and Translating of Italian; Business Italian; Italian 4 (Honours)
Course awards: BA ,Major in BA, 3FT, 4Hons, PT; B Sc, 3FT, PT
EFTSU: 19.44

VICTORIA

Australian Catholic University
(formerly known as Institute of Catholic Education)
Christ Campus, 17 Castlebar Road, Oakleigh, Vic, 3166 (03) 563 3600
Course titles: Italian 1A to 4A; Italian 1B TO 6B
EFTSU: 11.6

Deakin University
(includes the former Victoria College)
336 Glenferrie Road, Malvern, Vic 3144 (03) 805 3333
Faculty: Arts
Course titles: Italian 1, 2
Course awards: Major in BA (Interpreting/Translating),3FT,PT at Toorak Campus; Major in Dip Teach (Prim), (Community Langs), 3FT,PT at Toorak Campus
EFTSU: 10.50

La Trobe University
Bundoora, Vic 3083 (03) 479 1111
Course titles: Italian IA-IC, IIB, IIC ,III B, C; Italian II ER: Italy from Enlightenment to Romanticism; Italian IIN: The Italian Novella; Italian IIR: Italian Renaissance Literature; Italian II VCI/ III VCI: Variation and Change in Twentieth Century Italian Language; Italian II MIC/ III MIC: Modern Italian Civilisation; Italian III CS: Church and State in Italy; Italian III DN: Dante; Italian III FI: Women in 20th Century Italy; Italian III MN: 20th Century Italian Novel; Italian III T: Italian Theatre; Italian III W: Decadent Literature
Course awards: B.A., B.A. HONS, M.A., PhD, 2 1/2-5FT, 3-6PT MA, 1-3FT, 1-5PT MA (Prelim), 1FT, PT G Dip Humanities, 12 mths FT, PT (after degree) Major in BA, 3FT, 4Hons, PT
EFTSU: 85.00

Monash University
Wellington Road, Clayton, Vic 3168 (03) 565 3015
Admissions: Clayton CampusWellington Road, Clayton, Vic 3168
Faculty: Arts
Course titles: Italian I-VII; Introductory, Intermediate, Advanced I, II; Individual Option (IT219), Individual Option (IT315); Introduction to the Linguistic History of Italy; Italian Language and Society (IT223), (IT323); Modern Italian Literature and Society I-IV,(IT434); Second Language Acquisition and Attrition, (IT355); Introduction to the Linguistic History of Italy; The Italian Experience in Australia: Perspectives; Dante (IT347)
Course awards: BA,Major in BA, 3FT, PT , BA (Hons)
EFTSU: 43.78

Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology
(includes the former Phillip Institute of Techonology)
360 Swanston Street, Melbourne, Vic 3001 (03) 662 0611
Admissions: The Assistant Registrar Office for Prospective Students, Building 8, 124 La Trobe Street, Melbourne VIC 3001
Faculty: Community Services and Policy Studies
Course titles: Italian Introductory 1-3; Italian Advanced 1-3
Course award: BA (Multicultural Studies)
EFTSU: 15.03

Swinburne University of Technology
John Street, Hawthorn, Vic 3122 (03) 819 8444
Faculty: Arts
Course titles: Italian 1, 2, 3; Italian 1A (Post VCE), 2A (Post VCE); Italian 3C
Course awards: BA, BBus/BA, Major in BA, 3FT, 4Hons, PT
EFTSU: 37.15

University of Melbourne
Parkville, Vic 3052 (03) 344 4000
Faculty: Arts, School of Humanities and Information Studies
Course titles: Italian Part 1, 1A, 2, 2A, 3, 3B; Italian Part 2E and 3E (Augmented Post-First Year Beginners); Italian Part 4 and 4B (Honours); Italian Honours Thesis; Community Language A, B, C1, C2; Language and Literature A25
Course awards: BA, BA (Hons), MA (Lang. and Lit.) by research and limited coursework, 1FT, PT Major in BA, 3FT, 4Hons, PT
EFTSU: 47.53

Victoria University of Technology
(formerly Western Institute and Footscray Institute of Technology)
St Albans Campus, McKechnie Street, St Albans, Vic 3021 (03) 365 2111
Faculty: Arts, Dept of Humanities, Footscray Campus (03) 688 4309
Course titles: Major in Italian (6 units 3 years); Preparatory course in Italian (1 year)
Course award: BA Australian Cultural Studies
EFTSU: 41.92

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Edith Cowan University (Mount Lawley Campus)
2 Bradford Street, Mount Lawley, WA 6050 (09) 271 9258
Faculty: School of Community and Language Studies
Course titles: Italian for Interpreters and Translators 1- 5; Italian, Introductory and Basic; Italian (Society, Living Things, Science and Technology, the Arts)1-3; Italian (Primary and Intermediate) 1-3; Italian (Research Essay and Research Orientation)
Course awards: BA (Interpreting and Translating), 3FT, PT, (specialisations in German, Italian, Portuguese, Vietnamese), Grad Dip Arts (Translating/Interpreting), 2PT, BA (Hons), BA Ed (Secondary and Primary), Assoc Dip Arts
EFTSU: 27.13

Murdoch University
South Street, Murdoch, WA 6150 (09) 332 2421
Admissions: Central Admissions Office
Faculty: Humanities
Course titles: Reading Italian IIA, IIB
Course awards: BA, BA (Interpreting/Translating), 3FT, PT Assoc Dip Arts (Interpreting/Translating), 2FT, PT
EFTSU: 10.01

University of Western Australia
Mounts Bay Road, Crawley, WA 6009 (09) 380 3838
Faculty: Arts
Course titles: Italian 100, 110, 250. 251, 260, 261, 271, 300, 320; The World of Verga (Topic 210), Verga (Topic 309); Manzoni and the Risorgimento (Topic 212); Linguistic History of Italy (Topic 213); Writers of Modern Italy (Topic 214); The Italies in Crisis (Topic 215); Dantes Purgatorio (Topic 301); Petrarch and Italian Love Poetry (Topic 303); Boccaccio and the Human Comedy (Topic 304); The Rhetoric and the Reality: Renaissance Florence; The Literature of Entertainment in Renaissance Italy (Topic 306); Goldoni and the Commedia Dell'arte (Topic 307); Decadentism in Italy (Topic 308); Pirandello and Modernism in Italian Drama (Topic 310); Svevo and Gadda: 20th C. Italian Prose (Topic 311); The Modern Italian Novel (Topic 312); Language and Society in Contemporary Italy (Topic 313); Italian Dialectology (Topic 314); The Italies in Crisis (Topic 315); Sociolinguistics; Italian In Australialtalian Language; Language And Context; Dissertation
Course awards: BA, MA by thesis, 1FT, PT Major in BA, 3FT, 4Hons, PT
EFTSU: 57.48

INSTITUTION	ADDRESS	COURSE	LEVEL	CONTACT
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY				
Australian National Uni.	Centre for Continuing Education Freepost 355 CCE ANU GPO Box 4 CANBERRA ACT 2601	A Taste of Tuscany Flavouring the Regions of Italy Beginner's Italian: Italian for Italophiles Continuing Italian	Trip Trip Intermediate Intermediate	 Julie Docker Julie Docker
Dept of Ed., Employment & Education & Training Training	Dept Education, Employment & Training 12 Mort Street CANBERRA CITY ACT 2600	Italian Government Scholarship	Australian citizens under 30 Italo-Australia citizens under 40	Dept Employment
NEW SOUTH WALES				
Italian Institute of Culture	Italian Institute of Culture 424 George Street SYDNEY NSW 2000	Italian Government Scholarship University of Perugia Scholarships 1 month scholarships in Perugia	Australian citizens under 30 Italo-Australian citizens under 40 Teachers of Italian - 10 candidates 10 candidates	(02) 221 4087 Italian Institute of Culture
Macquarie University	Continuing Education Program School of Modern Languages RYDE NSW	Italian	Beginners to Advanced Intermediate English as a second language	Doina Botton Gregory Byrnes Loretta Giusti (02) 805 7027/7026
NSW Dept of School Education	Distance Education/Learning Materials Production Centre Open High School 52-58 William Street KINGS CROSS NSW 2011	Italian 2 Unit Italian 2 Unit Italian 3 Unit	Secondary School	Margaret Hopkins Trina Supit (02) 339 8495
St George & Sutherland Regional Evening College Inc.	Adult Education Endeavour High School The Boulevarde CARINGBAH NSW 2229	Italian - Beginners Courses Italian - Level 1 Italian - Level 2	Evening	(02) 540 3711 (02) 525 2332 (fax)
University of Sydney	Centre for Continuing Education Mackie Building K01 UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY NSW 2006	Italian Introductory I Introductory II Intermediate I Intermediate II Travel Italian	Tertiary	Robert Pastorelli Convenor
WEA	WEA Centre 72 Bathurst Street SYDNEY NSW 2000	Italian Unit 1 x 6 Italian II x 3 Italian III x 2 Italian IV Advanced Italian Conversation	Tertiary	(02) 2642781

QUEENSLAND				
Griffith University	Griffith University Kessels Road NATHAN QLD 4111	Dante Alighieri Cultural Tour DA Scholarships DA Scholarships to Italy DA local study grants Italian Govt Scholarships to Siena	Members of DA/students of Italian As above Student or practising teachers of Italian As above but under 26 Teachers of Italian	Italian Studies, Griffith Uni., Division of Humanities, 'Dante News': Dr. Zingone (07) 875 7159
James Cook University of North Queensland	Institute of Modern Languages James Cook University of Nth Qld TOWNSVILLE QLD 4811	Italian - Elementary Italian - Intermediate		(077) 814872
Queensland Board of Senior School Studies	Floor 9, 135 Wickham Terrace SPRING HILL QLD 4004 PO Box 307, SPRING HILL 4004	Italian (taught at Hendra Secondary College)		(07) 864 0299 (07) 832 1329 (fax)
University of Queensland	Institute of Modern Languages Room 208, Level 2 Joyce Ackroyd Building University of Queensland QLD 4072	Accelerated Elementary Intermediate Accelerated Elementary x 5 Intermediate Lower x 2 Intermediate Upper x 1 Advanced Lower x 1 Advanced Higher x 1		
SOUTH AUSTRALIA				
University of Adelaide	Office of Continuing Education North Terrace Campus North Terrace ADELAIDE SA 5000	Italian First Year x 5 Italian 2nd year x 3 Italian 3rd year x 2 Italian 4th year x 2 Italian advanced x 2	Tertiary	(08) 228 4777
WEA	WEA PO Box 7055 Hutt Street ADELAIDE SA 5000	Italian 1	Tertiary	Piero Merendi (08) 223 1272
TASMANIA				
Adult Education	ICWA - School of Italian 81 Federal Street HOBART TAS 7000	Italian for Beginners Italian (Beginners)		Teodino Ottavi Graziano Ceron

VICTORIA				
Council of Adult Education	256 Flinders Street MELBOURNE VIC 3000	Italian - Introduction Italian 1 x 6 Italian 2 x 4 Italian 3-4 Italian 4, Italian: Conversation & Reading Italian: Advanced x 2 Italian: Conversation	Tertiary Over 55s	 Adriana Congiu Renata Summo Francesca Scolaro Bruna Galli Mary Cooper Bruna Galli (03) 652 0638
La Trobe University	La Trobe Uni. Language Centre Plenty Road BUNDOORA VIC 3083	Beginners	Tertiary Levels 1-4 Italian for Italians	Beatrice Glattauer Course Co-ordinator (03) 4792527
Princes Hill Evening Centre	PO Box 263 NORTH CARLTON VIC 3054	Italian 1A,1B, 2A, 2B	Beginners to Advanced	(03) 388 2022 (03) 387 0621 (fax)
University of Melbourne	Horwood Language Centre PARKVILLE 3052 (03) 344 5145	Levels 1-2 Italian for Italians Level 3		Felipe O'Neill
Victorian School of Languages	PO Box 124 CARLTON SOUTH VIC 3053	Italian		(03) 639 1230/1231
WESTERN AUSTRALIA				
Albany Italian Club	Italian Exchange Student Scheme	Student exchange between Italy and Australia	Secondary	Franco Smargiassi
Uni. of Western Australia	UWA Extension Uni. of Western Australia NEDLANDS WA 6009	UWA Extension Italian - TEE Enrichment Italian - Level 1 Italian - Level 2 Italian - Level 3-4 Italian - Level 6	Tertiary Beginners	 Juliana Burman J. Burman & S.Conversano Silvia Conversano Juliana Burman Angelina Bacich
Western Australian Assoc. of Teachers of Italian	WAATI/Intercultural Student Exchange	Student exchange between Australia and Italy	Secondary	Ms Angela Signorile President

This grid was compiled by Belinda Cotton from information supplied by Barbara Baker, Senior Research Assistant, National Language and Literacy Institute of Australia, Queensland.

APPENDIX E ATTITUDINAL SURVEY FORM

THE NATIONAL LANGUAGES & LITERACY INSTITUTE OF AUSTRALIA

KEY LANGUAGES PROJECT

LANGUAGE STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE

For information contact Athol Yates, National Language and Literacy Institute of Australia. 112 Wellington Parade, East Melbourne Vic 3002
Tel: (03) 416 2422 Fax (03) 416 0231

Name of School _____
State:
Type of school: [ ] State
[ ] Catholic
[ ] Independent

Part A: Student Profile

1. Sex [ ] Male [ ] Female

2. If you were not born in Australia, at what age did you come to Australia? _____

From which country did you come? _____

3. What level of education did your parents reach? *(Tick only one box for each parent)*

	Father	Mother
Primary	[ ]	[ ]
Post primary	[ ]	[ ]
Year 12	[ ]	[ ]
Undergraduate degree	[ ]	[ ]
Post graduate degree	[ ]	[ ]
Other	[ ]	[ ]

Please specify
Mother: _____
Father: _____

Part B: Language background

4. Which language other than English is used at home? *(Tick only one box)*

[ ]	French	[ ]	Spanish
[ ]	German	[ ]	Italian
[ ]	Indonesian	[ ]	An Italian dialect
[ ]	Malay	[ ]	Arabic
[ ]	Mandarin Chinese	[ ]	Japanese
[ ]	Cantonese	[ ]	Other language
[ ]	Other Chinese dialect		Please specify _____
Please specify _____		[ ]	English only

5. Do you speak this language with: *(You can tick more than one box)*

❒	Mother	❒	Grandparents
❒	Father	❒	Other relatives
❒	Brothers and sisters	❒	People from your parents' country
❒	Other Please specify _____		

6. What subjects are you studying at school this year?

_____
_____
_____

7. To which level do you intend to study? *(Tick only one box)*

[ ] Year 11
[ ] Year 12
[ ] TAFE
[ ] Tertiary institution

Part C: Language study at school

All of the following questions are about languages other than English, but do not refer to Latin.

8. Did you study a language at school (including Saturday School or Ethnic School) when you were in Year 10?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

(If you answered "No", this is the last question for you.)

9. Which language or languages did you study at Year 10?

Language 1: (Specify)_____

Language 2: (Specify)_____

(Questions 10 to 13 will be about the language you named as Language 1, questions 14 to 17 will be about the language you named as Language 2.)

10. If you discontinued Language 1 after Year 10, which of the following factors contributed to your decision?

[ ] I did not wish to continue. *(You can tick more than one box)*

This was because

❒ I do not like languages
❒ There were too many native speakers in the class
❒ The subject was too difficult
❒ My friends did not take this language
❒ I did not like the teacher
❒ Other reasons
Please specify_____
_____

[ ] I would have liked to continue, however ... *(You can tick more than one box)*

❒ The language was not available
❒ I considered other subjects more important for my overall study plan.
❒ There were time table clashes with other subjects
❒ Other reasons
Please specify_____
_____

11. If you are studying Language 1 this year, how important were the following factors for your decision to continue? Rate your answers on a scale from 1 = "not important" to 5 = "very important".

Ethnic origin and /or religion
1__2__3__4__5
not important very important

Contact with the ethnic community in Australia which speaks Language 1
1__2__3__4__5
not important very important

Other contact with the country where the language is spoken (past travel, friends, parents' work, etc.)
1__2__3__4__5
not important very important

I thought this would be an easy subject for me.
1__2__3__4__5
not important very important

I had good marks in the past.
1__2__3__4__5
not important very important

I like studying languages.
1__2__3__4__5
not important very important

I like studying about the culture and society of the country where the language is spoken.
1__2__3__4__5
not important very important

I particularly like the teacher.
1__2__3__4__5
not important very important

I do not have definite plans for the future but I feel the language would enhance my future career prospects.
1__2__3__4__5
not important very important

I have definite plans to work in an area of employment where the language is used.
1__2__3__4__5
not important very important

I want to travel or live in the country.
1__2__3__4__5
not important very important

I have been advised to continue by my family.
1__2__3__4__5
not important very important

I have been advised to continue by my teachers.
1__2__3__4__5
not important very important

One or more of my friends was taking the subject.
1__2__3__4__5
not important very important

Although I had no strong desire to continue, other subjects were even less attractive.
1__2__3__4__5
not important very important

Other factors
Please specify: _____

12. To which level do you intend to study Language 1? *(Tick only one box)*

[ ] Year 11
[ ] Year 12
[ ] TAFE
[ ] Tertiary institution

13. How do you rate your ability to use Language 1?

	Poor	Good	Very Good	Fluent
Speaking	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Listening comprehension	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Writing	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Reading	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

If the language has a different script from English, how do you find using the writing system.

1__2__3__4__5
very easy very difficult

The following questions will be answered by students who studied two languages (not including Latin) in Year 10.

14. If you discontinued Language 2 after Year 10, which of the following factors contributed to your decision?

[ ] I did not wish to continue. *(You can tick more than one box)*

This was because

- ❒ I do not like languages
- ❒ There were too many native speakers in the class
- ❒ The subject was too difficult
- ❒ My friends did not take this language
- ❒ I did not like the teacher
- ❒ Other reasons

Please specify_____
_____

[ ] I would have liked to continue, however ... *(You can tick more than one box)*

- ❒ The language was not available
- ❒ I considered other subjects more important for my overall study plan.
- ❒ There were time table clashes with other subjects
- ❒ Other reasons

Please specify_____
_____

15. If you are studying Language 2 this year, how important were the following factors for your decision to continue? Rate your answers on a scale from 1 = "not important" to 5 = "very important".

Ethnic origin and /or religion	1__2__3__4__5 not important very important
Contact with the ethnic community in Australia which speaks Language 2	1__2__3__4__5 not important very important
Other contact with the country where the language is spoken (past travel, friends, parents' work, etc.)	1__2__3__4__5 not important very important
I thought this would be an easy subject for me.	1__2__3__4__5 not important very important
I had good marks in the past.	1__2__3__4__5 not important very important
I like studying languages.	1__2__3__4__5 not important very important
I like studying about the culture and society of the country where the language is spoken.	1__2__3__4__5 not important very important
I particularly like the teacher.	1__2__3__4__5 not important very important
I do not have definite plans for the future but I feel the language would enhance my future career prospects.	1__2__3__4__5 not important very important
I have definite plans to work in an area of employment where the language is used.	1__2__3__4__5 not important very important
I want to travel or live in the country.	1__2__3__4__5 not important very important
I have been advised to continue by my family.	1__2__3__4__5 not important very important
I have been advised to continue by my teachers.	1__2__3__4__5 not important very important
One or more of my friends was taking the subject.	1__2__3__4__5 not important very important
Although I had no strong desire to continue, other subjects were even less attractive.	1__2__3__4__5 not important very important

Other factors
Please specify: _____

16. To which level do you intend to study Language 2? *(Tick only one box)*

[ ] Year 11
[ ] Year 12
[ ] TAFE
[ ] Tertiary institution

17. How do you rate your ability to use Language 2?

	Poor	Good	Good	Very Fluent
Speaking	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Listening comprehension	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Writing	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Reading	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

If the language has a different script from English, how do you find using the writing system.

1__2__3__4__5
very easy very difficult

End of questionnaire **Thank you for your cooperation.**

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THE NATIONAL LANGUAGES & LITERACY INSTITUTE OF AUSTRALIA

Language & Literacy Publications

Unlocking Australia's Language Potential: Profiles of 9 Key Languages in Australia

Volume 1: Arabic
Volume 2: Chinese
Volume 3: French
Volume 4: German
Volume 5: Indonesian/Malay
Volume 6: Italian
Volume 7: Japanese
Volume 8: Modern Greek
Volume 9: Spanish
Summary Volume

The 9 Language Profiles and Summary Volume examine the Australian situation of the 9 languages of Wider Teaching (as identified by the National Policy on Languages) and make recommendations to enhance the learning of these languages in Australia. The reports will be particularly useful for applied linguists, curriculum developers and language policy makers.

ESL Development: Languages and Literacy in Schools

A practical resource for Australian teachers for assessing and reporting the progress of non-English speaking background students. It alsoprovides information on the characteristics of second language learning in schools and some ideas on how to meet students' ESL needs.

The Australian Second Language Learning Program

A detailed description of projects and materials produce by projects funded under the Australian Second Language Learning Program between 1988 and 1992. ASLLP is a Commonwealth initiative designed to stimulate language studies in Australian schools.

Directory of Scholarships For Language Students and Professionals

Contains over 250 different entries on scholarships, exchange schemes, fellowships and other awards for people who are studying, researching or teaching languages, linguistics, applied linguistics, language pedagogy and related disciplines.

ABC For Exporters: A Beginner's Cultural Checklist

Provides a comprehensive list of language and cultural issues which organisations with no experience in exporting need to consider before developing an export plan.

Languages at the Crossroads

Consists of two volumes; the Report and Guide to the Report. The Report provides a detailed examination of policy and practical situation of language teaching in Australia. It also explores demand, supply, recruitment, deployment, professional development and job satisfaction of teachers. The Guide provides selected elements and highlights of the Report.

Language and Language Education Vol 1, No 1. & Vol 2, No 1.

Working papers of the NLLIA. Vol 1, No 1 includes articles on inter-cultural communication and rapid profiling. Vol 2, No 1 will be of particular interest to those involved with language policy and practice in schools.

The Relationship Between International Trade and Linguistic Competence

Department of Employment, Education and Training

Room For Two: A Study of Bilingual Education at Bayswater South Primary School

By Sue Fernandez. The extensive experience gained from managing the German bilingual program at Bayswater South Primary School is of relevance to all schools that have or are considering a language program.

Publications can be ordered from: NLLIA, 9th Level, 300 Flinders St, Melbourne Vic 3000
Tel: 03 614 0255 Fax: 03 629 4708

Volume 6: Italian

Despite the 24,000 kilometres of ocean between Australia and Italy, to many Australians, Italian means neighbour, friend, spouse or grandparent. It means sugar cane fields and market gardening. It means construction and manufacturing workers, the local shoemaker, baker or greengrocer. It means 620,000 Australians of Italian ancestry living all over the country and contributing with their work, culture and imagination to making Australia a forward-looking and multicultural society.

Italian brings home images of a time-honoured culture central to our understanding of art, music, literature and science but also a modern culture at the cutting edge of creative technologies. Today's Italy leads in quality products, design and fashion no less than in those things that enhance the quality of life such as good food and fine films.

More than 260,000 young people in Australia are studying Italian at school. This helps Italian background children acquire formal speaking and writing skills in their home and community language. It also provides many other students with important experience in learning a second language. This knowledge helps develop links with the culture and know-how of Italy as well as the numerous members of the Italo-Australian community.

The Profile examines Italian language education in Australia from primary school to university, and looks at issues and approaches to programs, curriculum, teacher development, materials, students' motivation, as well as policies and innovations. The breadth and variety of the Australian experience in the teaching and learning of Italian offers valuable insights for further development of policies and practices in language education.

Profiles of 9 Languages of Wider Teaching

The Nine Languages

The nine languages featured in these profile studies were categorised as Languages of Wider Teaching. The nine languages are: Arabic, Modern Standard Chinese, French, German, Modern Greek, Indonesian/Malay, Italian, Japanese and Spanish.

These languages represent the vast bulk of the second language learning effort in Australian education. As such, these languages consume the greatest proportion of the resources devoted to the teaching of second languages in this country and will do so for several years to come. These nine were selected for reasons of domestic importance, such as community bilingualism and equal educational opportunities for minority language speakers, and international importance, such as economic and political significance.

Background

The nine languages were designated Languages of Wider Teaching by the 1987 National Policy on Languages. Resources were provided to promote the teaching of these languages and in early 1990, the Australian Advisory Council on Languages and Multicultural Education, which was charged with the responsibility for the implementation of the National Policy on Languages, decided to review their progress since 1987. These 9 languages have now been incorporated into the 14 Priority Languages of the Australian Language and Literacy Policy expanding the priority list to include Aboriginal languages, Korean, Russian, Thai and Vietnamese.

The Profiles

The 9 Profiles represent more than a review of the state of play of these languages. The studies promise to bring about a more precise and language-specific form of planning for the teaching and learning of languages in Australia and therefore could well represent a more mature phase in policy making itself. In recent years, language policies have made only generic statements about individual languages or groups of languages. Since there is now a high level of consensus across Australia about the importance of language study, these Profiles will shift the focus to particular issues that affect individual languages.

Who Will Use These Profiles?

These Profiles will be invaluable to all people involved in language and business. Specifically, users will include language policy makers and planners, teachers, lecturers, the media, business associations and researchers.

Uses

The Profiles will be used for planning school and higher education programs, curriculum writing, research, estimating needs in interpreting and translating, and estimating the needs of business to target overseas markets. They will be of continuing value as a stocktake of the 9 studied languages but also of value to the methodology of profiling. The NLLIA intends to study other languages in this same way.